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A TREATISE
ON
HINDU LAW AND USAGE.

On Hindu Law

A TREATISE

ON

HINDU LAW AND USAGE.

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BY

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(Since issuing the work, the following Preface was received from Mr. Mayne.)

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

IN issuing a new edition of this work, I may, perhaps, be permitted to offer my best thanks to the Bench, the Bar, and the Public generally, whose cordial reception of the first edition has rendered it necessary so quickly to prepare a second. Sufficient time has not elapsed to test the accuracy of the work very closely by judicial examination. But I am happy to find that in one important particular it has met with an unexpectedly rapid confirmation. I refer to the view which I put forward in Chapter XVI that the Law of Succession under the Mitāksharâ, and in fact everywhere except in Bengal, was not based upon any theory of religious benefits, but upon the simple principle of consanguinity. This doctrine had already been laid down with exhaustive learning by the Judges of the Bombay High Court in the case of *Lallubhai v. Mankoooverbai*, (2 Bomb. L. R., 388) in a judgment which was not published till after my treatise, and which has within the last few weeks been affirmed by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Although the judgments in terms only apply to the Bombay Presidency, the general principles on which they proceed will go far to revolutionise the views which have hitherto been taken of the Hindu Law of Inheritance.

PREFACE.

The present edition, unlike its predecessor, has been printed in Madras, which will explain the fact that many cases which have appeared during the progress of the work through the Press are only to be found in the Addenda, instead of being incorporated in their proper places in the text. In other respects I hope the reader will not suffer from the distance which has separated Author from Printer. My friend Mr. SPRING BRANSON has kindly undertaken the labour of correcting the Press, and has performed his task with an amount of care and accuracy which it would be impossible to surpass, and for which I hereby offer my warmest thanks.

JOHN D. MAYNE.

TEMPLE, 1st August 1880.

P R E F A C E.

I HAVE endeavoured in this Work to show, not only what the Hindu Law is, but how it came to be what it is. Probably many of my professional readers may think that the latter part of the enquiry is only a waste of time and trouble, and that in pursuing it I have added to the bulk of the volume without increasing its utility. It might be sufficient to say, that I have aimed at writing a book which should be something different from a mere practitioner's manual.

Hindu Law has the oldest pedigree of any known system of jurisprudence, and even now it shows no signs of decrepitude. At this day it governs races of men, extending from Cashmere to Cape Comorin, who agree in nothing else except their submission to it. No time or trouble can be wasted, which is spent in investigating the origin and development of such a system, and the causes of its influence. I cannot but indulge a hope, that the very parts of this Work which seem of least value to a practising lawyer, may be read with interest by some who never intend to enter a Court. I also hope that the same discussions which appear to have only an antiquarian and theoretical interest, may be found of real service, if not to the counsel who has to win a case, at all events to the Judge who has to decide it.

The great difficulty which meets a Judge is to choose between the conflicting texts which can be presented to him on almost every question. This difficulty is constantly increased by the labours of those scholars who are yearly opening up fresh sources of information. The works which they have made accessible are, naturally, the works of the very early writers, who had passed into oblivion because the substance of their teaching was embodied in more modern treatises. Many of these early texts are in conflict with each other, and still more are in conflict with the general body of law as it has been administered in our Courts.

An opinion seems to be growing up that we have been going all wrong; that we have been mistaken in taking the law from its more recent interpreters, and that our only safe course is to revert to antiquity, and, wherever it may be necessary, to correct the *Mitāksharâ* or the *Dâya Bhâga* by Manu, Gautama, or Vaṣishṭha. Such a view omits to notice that some of these authors are perhaps two thousand years old, and that even the East does change, though slowly. The real task of the lawyer is not to reconcile these contradictions, which is impossible, but to account for them. He will best help a Judge who is pressed, for instance, by a text which forbids a partition, or which makes a father the absolute despot of his family, by showing him that these texts were once literally true, but that the state of society in which they were true has long since passed away. This has been done to a considerable extent by Dr. Mayr in his most valuable work, *Das Indische Erbrecht*. He seems, however, not to have been acquainted with the writers of the Bengal school, and of course had no knowledge of the developments which the law has received through nearly a century of judicial

decisions. I have tried to follow in the course marked out by him, and by Sir H. S. Maine in his well-known writings. It would be presumption to hope that I have done so with complete, or even with any considerable success. But I hope the attempt may lead the way to criticism, which will end in the discovery of truth.

Another, and completely different current of opinion, is that of those who think that Hindu Law, as represented in the Sanskrit writings, has little application to any but Brâhmans, or those who accept the ministrations of Brâhmans, and that it has no bearing upon the life of the inferior castes, and of the non-Áryan races. This view has been recently put forward by Mr. Nelson in his "View of the Hindu Law as administered by the Madras High Court." In much that he says I thoroughly agree with him. I quite agree with him in thinking that rules, founded on the religious doctrines of Brâhmanism, cannot be properly applied to tribes who have never received those doctrines, merely upon evidence that they are contained in a Sanskrit law-book. But it seems to me that the influence of Brâhmanism upon even the Sanskrit writers has been greatly exaggerated, and that those parts of the Sanskrit law which are of any practical importance are mainly based upon usage, which in substance, though not in detail, is common both to Áryan and non-Áryan tribes. Much of the present Work is devoted to the elucidation of this view. I also think that he has under-estimated the influence which the Sanskrit law has exercised, in moulding to its own model the somewhat similar usages even of non-Áryan races. This influence has been exercised throughout the whole of Southern India during the present century by means of our Courts and Pandits, by

Vakils, and officials, both judicial and revenue, almost all of whom till very lately were Brâhmans.

That the Drâviḍian races have any conscious belief that they are following the Mitâksharâ, I do not at all suppose. Nor has an Englishman any conscious belief that his life is guided by Lord Coke and Lord Mansfield. But it is quite possible that these races may be trying unconsciously to follow the course of life which is adopted by the most respectable, the most intellectual, and the best educated among their neighbours. The result would be exactly the same as if they studied the Mitâksharâ for themselves. That this really is the case is an opinion which I arrived at, after fifteen years' acquaintance with the litigation of every part of the Madras Presidency. Even in Malabar I have witnessed continued efforts on the part of the natives to cast off their own customs, and to deal with their property by partition, alienation, and devise, as if it were governed by the ordinary Hindu Law. These efforts were constantly successful in the provincial Courts, but were invariably foiled on appeal to the Sudder Court at Madras, the objection being frequently taken for the first time by an English barrister. It so happened that during the whole time of this silent revolt the Sudder Court possessed one or more Judges, who were thoroughly acquainted with Malabar customs, and by whom cases from that district were invariably heard. Had the Court been without such special experience, the process would probably have gone on with such rapidity, that by this time every Malabar *tarwâd* would have been broken up. The revolt would have been a revolution.

A third class of opinion is that of the common-sense Englishman, whose views are very ably represented by Mr. Cunning-

ham—now a Judge of the Bengal High Court—in the preface to his recent “Digest of Hindu Law.” He appears to look upon the entire law with a mixture of wonder and pity. He is amused at the absurdity of the rule which forbids an orphan to be adopted. He is shocked at finding that a man’s great-grandson is his immediate heir, while the son of that great-grandson is a very remote heir, and his own sister is hardly an heir at all. He thinks everything would be set right by a short and simple code, which would please everybody, and upon the meaning of which the Judges are not expected to differ. These of course are questions for the legislator, not for the lawyer. I have attempted to offer materials for the discussion by showing how the rules in question originated, and how much would have to be removed if they were altered. The age of miracles has passed, and I hardly expect to see a code of Hindu Law which shall satisfy the trader and the agriculturist, the Punjâbi and the Bengali, the pandits of Benares and Ramaiswaram, of Umritsur and of Poona. But I can easily imagine a very beautiful and specious code, which should produce much more dissatisfaction and expense than the law as at present administered.

I cannot conclude without expressing my painful consciousness of the disadvantage under which I have laboured from my ignorance of Sanskrit. This has made me completely dependent on translated works. A really satisfactory treatise on Hindu Law would require its author to be equally learned as a lawyer and an Orientalist. Such a work could have been produced by Mr. Colebrooke, or by the editors of the Bombay Digest, if the Government had not restricted the scope of their labours. Hitherto, unfortunately, those who have possessed the necessary

qualifications have wanted either the inclination or the time. The lawyers have not been Orientalists, and the Orientalists have not been lawyers. For the correction of the many mistakes into which my ignorance has led me, I can only most cordially say,—*Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*.

JOHN D. MAYNE.

INNER TEMPLE,
July, 1878.

THIS edition prepared by Mr. Mayne has been passed through the press by me. I mention this fact merely to explain that I am solely responsible for the diacritical marks used in the body of the work. Want of the necessary type prevented the employment of these marks throughout.

J. H. SPRING BRANSON.

3rd July, 1880.

ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| All. | Indian Law Reports. Allahabad Series. |
| B. L. R. | Bengal Law Reports. |
| Bor. | Borrodaile's Reports. Folio. 1825. |
| Breeks. | Primitive Tribes of the Nilaghiris, by J. W. Breeks, Esq. |
| Calc. | Indian Law Reports. Calcutta Series. |
| D. Bh. | Daya Bhaga, by Jimuta Vahana. (Colebrooke.) |
| D. Ch. | Dattaka Chandrika. (Sutherland.) |
| D. K. S. | Daya Krama Sangraha. (Wynch.) |
| D. M. | Dattaka Mimamsa. (Sutherland.) |
| Dig. | Jagannatha's Digest. (Colebrooke.) 3 vols. 1801. |
| Elb. | Elberling on Inheritance, &c. |
| F. MacN. | Sir F. MacNaghten's Considerations on Hindu Law. 1829. |
| Gib. | Gibelin. Etudes sur le Droit civil des Hindous. 1846. |
| Goldst. | Goldstücker's Present Administration of Hindu Law. 1871. |
| I. A. | Law Reports. Indian Appeals. |
| Mad. Dec. | Decisions of the Madras Sudder Court. The selected decisions from 1805 to 1847 are cited by volumes: the subsequent reports, by years. |
| Mad. H. C. | Decisions of the Madras High Court. 1862 to 1876. |
| Madhav. | Madhava's Daya Vibhaga. (Burnell.) 1868. |
| Marsh. | Marshall's Cases on Appeal to the High Court of Bengal. |
| Mayr. | Das Indische Erbrecht. 1873. |
| McLennan. | Studies in Ancient History. 1876. |
| M. I. A. | Moore's Indian Appeals. |
| Mit. | Mitakshara. (Colebrooke.) |
| M. Dig. | Morley's Digest. |
| N. C. | Sir Thomas Strange's Notes of Cases. Madras. 1816. |
| N. W. P. H. C. | Decisions of the High Court of the N. W. Provinces. Allahabad. 1869-1875. |
| Sev. | Cases on Appeal to High Court of Bengal in continuation of Marshall. By Sevestre. 1869. |
| Sm. Ch. | Smriti Chandrika. (Kristnasawmy Iyer). Madras. 1867. |
| Spencer. | Principles of Sociology. |
| Stra. H. L. | Sir Thomas Strange's Hindu Law. 1830. |

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| Stra. Man. | Mr. T. L. Strange's Manual of Hindu Law. 1863. |
| S.D. | Decisions of the Bengal Sudder Court. The selected decisions from 1791 to 1848 are cited by volumes, with a double paging, which refers to the original edition, and to that recently published in Calcutta. The subsequent reports are referred to by years. |
| Suth. Syn. | Mr. Sutherland's Synopsis of the Law of Adoption. The paging refers to this work as printed in Mr. Stokes' Hindu Law-Books. Madras. 1865. |
| T. & B. | Taylor and Bell. Supreme Court of Calcutta. |
| Teulon. | La Mère. Par A. Girard Teulon. 1867. |
| Thesawal. | The Thesawaleme; or, Laws and Customs of Jaffna. (H. F. Mutukisna.) 1862. |
| Varad. | Varadrajah's Vyavahara Nirnaya. (Burnell.) 1872. |
| V. Darp. | Vyavastha Darpana. By Shamachurn Sircar. 1867. |
| Viv. Chint. | Vivada Chintamani. By Vachespatis Misra. (Prosonno Coomar Tagore). 1865. |
| V. May. | Vyavahara Mayukha. (Borrodaile.) |
| W. & B. | West and Bühler's Digest. |
| W. MacN. | W. MacNaghten's Hindu Law. 1829. |
| W. R. | Sutherland's Weekly Reporter. |

Apastamba, Baudhayana, Gautama, Vasishtha and Vishnu, are cited from the translations by Dr. Bühler. Narada from Dr. Bühler or Dr. Jolly. Yajnavalkya from Dr. Roer or Professor Stenzler. Manu from Sir W. Jones.

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ADDENDA AND ERRATA.

At page 23, § 28, end of note (n), *add*, "The Mayukha is also said to be an authority paramount to the Mitakshara in the North Konkan, *Sakharam v. Sitabai*, 3 Bom. L. R. 353. The Viramitrodaya is rather a Benares than a Bombay authority, and of inferior weight to the Mayukha in Western India. *Bhondur Gurav v. Gangabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 369."

At page 34, § 42, end of note (h), *add*, "See *Lekraj Kuar v. Mahpal Singh*, 7 I. A. 63."

At page 42, end of § 50, *add*, "In a recent case, however, an ancient Zemindary in Madras, which had been held as military tenure, and was therefore impartible, was resumed by Government for arrears of revenue, and was then divided into two portions, one of which was granted to each of the two elder sons of the former holder, freed from all incidents of military tenure, under the ordinary Istimrar Sunnud. It was held by the Privy Council that the circumstances of the renewed grant carried with them no presumption that the new Zemindaries were intended to be impartible, or to descend in any other manner than that prescribed by the ordinary Hindu Law. (*Venkata Narasimha v. Narayana*, 7 I. A. 38)."

At page 103, end of § 111, *add*, "Accordingly in the recent case of *Karunabdi Ganesa v. Ratnamaiyar*, decided in the Privy Council, Feb. 21, 1880, an adoption was set aside, *inter alia*, on the ground that the consent of the managing member of the family, which might in other respects have been sufficient, had been obtained by the widow upon a representation that she had received authority to adopt from her deceased husband, such authority having been found never to have been given."

At page 107, § 112, end of note (r), *add*, "See *Karunabdi Ganesa v. Ratnamaiyar*, recently decided in the P. C., 21st Feb. 1880, where an adoption by a widow, with the consent of the managing member, and only adult *sapinda* of an undivided family was set aside on the ground, *inter alia*, that his consent was given from interested motives."

At page 114, note (j), for “ notes (z) (a)” read “ notes (a) (b).”

At page 130, § 137, note (g), after 13 B. L. R. 401, *add*, “ Affirmed in P. C., 7 I. A. 24.”

At page 136, end of note (c), *add*, “ See *Sukhbasi Lall v. Guman Singh*, 2 All. 366; where it is not clear whether the Court meant to lay down that a valid adoption once made could not be cancelled, or that a person, who had once deliberately made an adoption, was estopped from asserting that it was originally invalid.”

At page 177, § 189, end of note (d), *add*, “ Under Mithila law, however, it has been held that the mother is entitled to be guardian of the person of her minor son in preference to the father. *Jussoda Kooer v. Lallah Nettya*, 5 Calc. 43.”

At page 179, § 192, end of note (r), *add*, “ *Lal Das v. Nekunjo*, 4 Calc. 374.”

At page 232, § 252, end of note (f), *add*, “ *Runganyakamma v. Bulli Ramaya*, P. C., 5th July 1879.”

At page 257, note (h), for “ *Annoda Churn Kally Coomar*” read “ *Annoda Churn v. Kally Coomar*.”

At page 270, § 283, end of note (p), *add*, “ *Greenchunder v. Mackintosh*, 4 Calc. 897.”

At page 285, § 294, end of note (d), *add*, “ It would be otherwise if the lease, though for a term of years, was a fair and proper one, coming within the scope of the Zemindar’s authority as manager of the estate. *Ramanaden v. Srinavasa Murti*, 2 Mad. L. R. 80.”

At page 309, § 389, *dele* lines 9—11 from “ I am not aware”—to “ the point has,” and substitute, “ The right of the widow to enforce maintenance against a donee has, as far as I am aware, only been set up in one case, which was very recently decided in Allahabad (*k.k.*) There a husband, during his life, made a gift of his entire estate, without reserving maintenance to his widow, and it was held that the donee took subject to the liability to maintain her. The point has, however,” &c.

(*k.k.*) *Jamna v. Machul Sahu*, 2 All. 315.

At page 316, § 320, in note (s), for “ Act IX of 1871, sched. II, § 125—127,” read “ Act XV of 1877, sched. II, § 126.”

At page 322, § 326, end of note (q), *add*, “ Of course it makes no difference that the estate alienated is one which is impartible, and descends by the law of primogeniture. *Uddoy Addittya v. Jadublal*, 5 Calc. 113.”

At page 326, § 329, end of note (n), *add*, “ *Kherodemoney v. Doorgamoney*, 4 Calc. 455.”

At page 333, § 333, end of note (l), *add*, “ See *Venkata Narsammah v. Ramiah* 2 Mad. L. R. 108.”

At page 336, note (g), for “ *Dandsha*” read “ *Daudsha*.”

At page 336, § 335, end of note (h), *add*, "390."

At page 352, § 347, line 5, for "alienation," *read* "gift."

At page 354, § 348, end of note (g), *add*, "These cases have lately been affirmed by the P. C. in the case of *Lakshman Dada v. Ramchandra*, 11th May 1880."

At page 365, § 357, end of note (c), *add*, "*Kherodemoney v. Doorgamoney*, 4 Calc. 455."

At page 401, § 390, end of note (r), *add*, "*Uddoy Adittya v. Jadublal*, 5 Calc. 113."

At page 406, § 393, end of note (m), for "6 I. A." *read* "P. C., 5th July 1879."

At page 440, § 440, end of note (f), *add*, "*Smriti Chandrika*, XI, 5, § 2. 3. 6."

At page 485, § 461, in first line of note (g), for "6 I. A.," *read* "P. C., 5th July 1879."

At page 568, § 546, end of note (t), *add*, "The same view was very lately supported by the Calcutta High Court. *Raj Bullubh v. Oomesh Chunder*, 5 Calc. 44."

At page 578, note (n), for "*Brojo Kishoree Sreenath Bhowe*" *read* "*Brojo Kishorec v. Sreenath Bhowe*."

For "*Sancha*" and "*Lichita*" *read* "*Çancha*" and "*Likhita*," wherever the words occur.

§§ 338 and 383 for "*strîdhana*" *read* "*strîdhanum*."

§§ 423 and 425 for "*Shradh*" *read* "*Çrâddha*."

(Since issuing the work, the following Addenda and Errata have been added.)

At page 34, note (h), *add*, "Act XVII of 1876, s. 17 : 7 I. A., 63."

At page 79, note (q), *dele* 1 before "W. & B."

At page 86, note (m), for "*Chandrikâ*," *read* "*Mimâmsâ*."

At page 88, note (x), for § 115, *read* § 114.

At page 102, line 1, for "effect," *read* "effort."

At page 162, note (f), at end, *add*, 196.

At page 168, note (r), at end, *add*, 196.

At page 221, note (d), *add*, "*Rajnarain Singh v. Heera Lal*, 5 Calc. 142."

At page 222, line 13, for "the interest," *read* "an interest."

At page 237, note (b), at end *add*, 54.

At page 273, note (u), for 1859, *read* 1858.

At page 299, note (l), *add*, "*Loki Mahto v. Aghoree Ajail*, 5 Calc. 144."

At page 307, line 3, for "individual," *read* "undivided."

At page 316, after line 8 *add*, "where the transaction is an actual fraud by the manager upon the other members of the family, the member who objects has a right to have it absolutely set aside. *Ravji Janodhan v. Gungadharbhai*, 4 Bomb. L. R. 29."

- At page 389, note (n), *add*, "Dāya Bhāga, XI, 1 § 48 and per P. C. 7 I. A. 151."
- At page 402, note (b), 1st line *for* "Dāya Bhāga iv," *read* vi.
- At page 402, note (b) 6th line, *for* § 72, *read* 71.
- At page 405, line 19 *in place of* "P. C., March 5, 1880," *read* "7 I. A. 162."
- At page 406, note (o), 2nd line, *after* "V. May. IV. 4" *add*, "§ 4."
- At page 412, note (s), 2nd line, *for* "3 Mad. H. C. 63," *read* 69.
- At page 429, line 5, *for* "he," *read* "it."
- At page 431, note (m), 1st line, *after* "W. & B." *dele* "Introd."
- At page 450, note (t), 3rd line,)
- At page 451, note (x), 2nd line, } *after* "2 Bomb.," *add*, "L. R."
- At page 451, note (z), 5th line,)
- At page 455, note (l), *dele* 1, *before* "W. & B."
- At page 464, note (z), *dele* 8, *before* "D. K. S."
- At page 478, note (d), *for* 70, *read* 17.
- At page 485, line 24, *dele* X.
- At page 489, § 463, note (s), *add*, "*Sadu v. Baiza*, 4 Bomb. L. R. 37."
- At page 491, § 465, note (d), *add*, "See *Sadu v. Baiza*, 4 Bomb. L. R. 37, where it was held, that if a Çudra leaves a legitimate and an illegitimate son, and also a widow and a daughter, the two sons take the whole property jointly, and, on the death of the legitimate son, without issue, the whole passes by survivorship to the illegitimate son, subject to the maintenance of the widow and daughter."
- At page 496, § 471, end of note (g), *after* "13 B. L. R. 1," *add*, "*affd.* 7 I. A. 115."
- At page 501, note (c), *dele* 2, *before* "Smṛiti Chandrikâ."
- At page 509, note (h), *insert* 1, *before* "W. Mac. N."
- At page 524, note (j), *dele* 1, *before* "W. & B.," *and* 183, 185 *after* it.
- At page 524, end of note (k), *dele* "Introd."
- At page 545, § 550, note (m), *add*, "*Soki Mahto v. Aghoree Ajail*, 5 Calc. 141."
- At page 549, § 526, first line *after* "the only," *add*, "other."
- At page 579, note (r), last line, *in place of* reference to "Act IX of 1871," *read* "Act XV of 1877, Sched. ii, § 125, 141."



CHAPTER I.

ON THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF HINDU LAW.

§ 1. UNTIL very lately, writers upon Hindu Law have assumed, not only that it was recorded exclusively in the Sanskrit texts of the early sages, and the commentaries upon them, but that those sages were the actual originators and founders of that law. The earliest work which attracted European attention was that which is known as the Institutes of Manu. People talk of this as the legislation of Manu ; as if it was something which came into force on a particular day, like the Indian Penal Code, and which derived all its authority from being promulgated by him. Even those who are aware that it never had any legislative authority, and that it only described what its author believed to be, or wished to be the law, seem to imagine that those rules which govern civil rights among Hindus, and which we roughly speak of as Hindu law, are solely of Brahmanical origin. They admit that conflicting customs exist, and must be respected. But these are looked on as local violations of a law which is of general obligation, and which ought to be universally observed ; as something to be checked and put down, if possible, and to be apologised for, if the existence of the usage is proved beyond dispute.

Authority of
Sanskrit lawyers.

§ 2. On the other hand, those who derived their knowledge of law not from books, but from acquaintance with Hindus in their own homes, did not admit that the Brahmanical law had any such universal sway. Mr. Ellis, speaking of Southern India, says : “ The law of the Smritis, unless under various modifications, has never been the law of the

not universal.

Tamil and cognate nations" (a). The same opinion is stated in equally strong terms by Dr. Burnell and by Mr. Nelson in recent works (b). And Sir H. S. Maine, writing with special reference to the North-West of India, says: "The conclusion arrived at by the persons who seem to me of highest authority is, *first*, that the codified law—Manu and his glossators—embraced originally a much smaller body of usage than had been imagined, and, *next*, that the customary rules, reduced to writing, have been very greatly altered by Brahmanical expositors, constantly in spirit, sometimes in tenor. Indian law may be in fact affirmed to consist of a very great number of local bodies of usage, and of one set of customs reduced to writing, pretending to a diviner authority than the rest, exercising consequently a great influence over them, and tending, if not checked, to absorb them. You must not understand that these bodies of custom are fundamentally distinct. They are all marked by the same general features, but there are considerable differences of detail" (c).

Written and
unwritten law
substantially
similar.

§ 3. I believe that even those who hold to their full extent the opinions stated by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Nelson, would admit that the earliest Sanskrit writings evidence a state of law which, allowing for the lapse of time, is the natural antecedent of that which now exists. Also that the later commentators describe a state of things, which, in its general features, though not in all its details, corresponds fairly enough with the broad facts of Hindu life; for instance, in reference to the condition of the undivided family, the order of inheritance, the practice of adoption, and the like. The proof of the latter assertion seems to me to be ample. As regards Western India, we have a body of customs, which cover the whole surface of domestic law, laboriously ascertained by local inquiry and recorded by Mr. Steele, whilst many of the most important decisions in Borrodaile's Reports were also passed upon the testimony of living witnesses. As regards the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, we have similar evidence of the existing usages of Hindus proper,

(a) 2 Stra. H. L. 163. See the futwah of the pundits, 13 M. I. A. 149.

(b) Introduction to the Daya-Vibhaga, 13; Varadaraja, 7: Nelson's View of Hindu Law, Preface and chap. i.

(c) Village Communities, 52.

Jains, Jats, and Sikhs, in the decisions of the Courts of those provinces. As regards other parts of India the evidence is much more scanty. But it is a matter of every-day experience, that where there exists a local usage opposed to the recognised law-books, it is unhesitatingly set up, and readily accepted. As for instance, the exclusion of women from inheritance in Sholapur, and the practice of divorce and second marriages of females among the Maravers in Southern India. No attempt has ever been made to administer the law of the Mitakshara to the castes which follow the Maroomakatayem law in Malabar, and the Alya Santana law in Canara, because it was perfectly well known that their usages were distinct. Elsewhere that law is administered by native Judges, with the assistance of native pleaders, to native suitors, who seek for and accept it. If this law was not substantially in accordance with popular feeling, it seems inconceivable that those who are most interested in disclosing the fact, should unite in a conspiracy to conceal it. That there is such an accordance appears to me to be borne out by the remarkable similarity of this law to the usages of the Tamil inhabitants of the north of Ceylon, as stated in the Thesawaleme (*d*). But the question remains, whether these usages are of Brahmanical or of local origin. Whether the flavour of Brahmanism which pervades them is a matter of substance or of accident. Where usage and Brahmanism differ, which is the more ancient of the two.

§ 4. It is evident that this question is one of the greatest practical importance, and is one which a judge must frequently, though perhaps unconsciously, answer, before he can decide a case. For instance, it is quite certain that religious efficacy is the test of succession according to Brahmanical principles. If, then, one of two rival claimants appears to be preferable in every respect except that of religious efficacy, the judge will have to determine, whether the system which he is administering is based on Brahmanical principles at all. So as regards adoption. A Brahman tests its necessity and its validity, solely by religious motives. If an adoption is made with an utter absence of religious necessity or

Priority of usage
or Brahmanism
important.

(*d*) See as to this work, *post*, § 42.

motive, a judge would have to decide whether religion was an essential element in the transaction or not.

Sanskrit law
based on usage :

§ 5. My view is, that Hindu law is based upon immemorial customs, which existed prior to and independent of Brahmanism. That when the Aryans penetrated into India they found there a number of usages either the same as, or not wholly unlike, their own. That they accepted these, with or without modifications, rejecting only those which were incapable of being assimilated, such as polyandry, incestuous marriages, and the like. That the latter lived on a merely local life, while the former became incorporated among the customs of the ruling race. That when Brahmanism arose, and the Brahman writers turned their attention to law, they at first simply stated the facts as they found them, without attaching to them any religious significance. That the religious element subsequently grew up, and entwined itself with legal conceptions, and then distorted them in three ways. First, by attributing a pious purpose to acts of a purely secular nature. Secondly, by clogging those acts with rules and restrictions, suitable to the assumed pious purpose. And, thirdly, by gradually altering the customs themselves, so as to further the special objects of religion or policy favoured by Brahmanism.

not on direct
authority.

§ 6. I think it is impossible to imagine that any body of usage could have obtained general acceptance throughout India, merely because it was inculcated by Brahman writers, or even because it was held by the Aryan tribes. In Southern India, at all events, it seems clear that neither Aryans nor Brahmans ever settled in sufficient numbers to produce any such result (e). We know the tenacity with which Eastern races cling to their customs, unaffected by the example of those who live near them. We have no reason to suppose that the Aryans in India ever attempted to force their usages upon the conquered races, or that they could have succeeded in doing so, if they had tried. The Brahman treatises themselves negative any such idea. There is not an atom of dogmatism or controversy among the old Sûtra writers. They appear to be simply recording the usages they observed, and occasion-

(e) See Hunter's Orissa, i. 241-265; Nelson's View, chaps. i. & ii.; Madura Manual, Pt. II., p. 11, Pt. III., ch. ii.

ally stop to remark that the practices of some districts, or the opinions of other persons are different (*f*). The greater part of Manu is exclusively addressed to Brahmans, but he takes pains to point out that the laws and customs of districts, classes, and even of families ought to be observed (*g*). Example and influence, coupled with the general progress of society, have largely modified ancient usages; but a wholesale substitution of one set of usages for another appears to me to be equally opposed to philosophy and to facts.

§ 7. The most distinctive features of the Hindu law are the undivided family system, the order of succession, and the practice of adoption. The two latter are at present thoroughly saturated with Brahmanism. Its influence upon the family has only been exerted for the purpose of breaking it up. But in all cases, I think it will be satisfactorily shown, that Brahmanism has had nothing whatever to do with the early history of those branches of the law; that they existed independently of it, or even of Aryanism; and that where the religious element has entered into, and remodelled them, the change in this direction has been absolutely modern. This view will be developed at length in the course of the present work. It will be sufficient here briefly to indicate the nature of the argument.

Distinctive
features not
Brahmanical.

§ 8. The Joint Family is only one phase of that tendency to hold property in community, which, it is now proved, was once the ordinary mode of tenure. The attention of scholars was first drawn to this point by the Slavonian Village Communities. But it is now placed beyond doubt that joint ownership of a similar character is not limited to Slavonian or even to Aryan races, but is to be found in every part of the world where men have once settled down to an agricultural life (*h*). In India such a corporate system is universally found, either in the shape of Village Communities, or of the simple Joint Family. So far from the system owing its origin to Brahmanism, or even to Aryanism, its most striking instances are found precisely in those provinces where the Brahman and Aryan influence was weakest. As regards the Village Com-

Joint Family
system. ✓

(*f*) See Apast. ii. 14, § 6-9; Gaut. xxviii. § 23, 38.

(*g*) See *post*, § 40; see M. Müller, A. S. L. 50.

(*h*) See Laveleye, *Propriété*, and Sir H. S. Maine's *Works*, *passim*.

munities, the Punjab and the adjoining districts are the region in which alone they flourish in their primitive vigour. This is the tract which the Aryans must have first traversed on entering India. Yet it seems to have been there that Brahmanism most completely failed to take root. Dr. Muir cites various passages from the *Mâhâbharata* which establish this. The inhabitants "who dwell between the five rivers which are associated with the Sindhu (Indus) as the sixth," are described as "those impure *Bahikas*, who are outcasts from righteousness." "Let no Arya dwell there even for two days. There dwell degraded Brahmans, contemporary with Prajapati. They have no Veda, no Vedic ceremony, nor any sacrifice." "There a *Bâhika*, born a Brahman, becomes afterwards a Kshatriya, a Vaisiya, or a Sudra, and eventually a barber. And again the barber becomes a Brahman. And once again the Brahman there is born a slave. One Brahman alone is born in a family. The other brothers act as they will without restraint"(i). And they retain this character to the present day, as we shall see that with them the religious element has never entered into their secular law. Next to the Punjab the strongest traces of the Village Community are found among the Dravidian races of the South. Similarly as regards the Joint Family. It still flourishes in its purest form, not only undivided but indivisible, among the polyandrous castes of Malabar and Canara, over whom Brahmanism has never attempted to cast even the hem of its garment. Next to them, probably, the strictest survival of the undivided family is to be found in Northern Ceylon, among the Tamil emigrants from the South of India. It is only when the family system begins to break up that we can trace the influence of Brahmanism, and then the break up proceeds in the direct ratio of that influence (k).

Law of inheritance.

§ 9. The case of inheritance is even more strongly in favour of the same view. The principle that "the right of inheritance, according to Hindu law, is wholly regulated with reference to the spiritual benefits to be conferred on the deceased proprietor," has been laid down on the highest judicial authority as an arti-

(i) Muir, S. T., ii. 482.

(k) See *post*, chap. vii. § 234.

cle of the legal creed, which is universally true, and which it would be heresy to doubt. It is strictly and absolutely true in Bengal. It is not so elsewhere (*l*). Among the Hindus of the Punjab, custom and not spiritual considerations determine the order of succession (*m*). Throughout the Presidency of Bombay, numerous relations, and especially females, inherit, to whom no ingenuity can ascribe the slightest religious merit. According to the Mitakshara, consanguinity in the male line is the test of heirship, not religious merit. All those who follow its authority accept agnates to the fourteenth degree, whose religious efficacy is infinitesimal, in preference to cognates, such as a sister's son, whose capacity for offering sacrifices ranks very high. The doctrine that heirs are to be placed in the direct order of their spiritual merit, was announced for the first time by Jimuta Vahana, and has been expanded by his successors. But it rendered necessary a complete remodelling of the order of succession. Cognates are now shuffled in among the agnates, instead of coming after them; and the very definition of cognates is altered, so as to exclude those who are actually named as such by the Mitakshara. The result is a system, whose essence is Brahmanism, and whose logic is faultless, but which is no more the system of early India, or of the rest of India, than the English Statute of Distributions (*n*). In Bengal the inheritance follows the duty of offering sacrifices. Elsewhere the duty follows the inheritance.

§ 10. The law of adoption has been even more successfully appropriated by the Brahmans, and in this instance they have almost succeeded in blotting out all trace of a usage existing previous to their own. There can be no doubt that among those Aryan races who have practised ancestor-worship, the existence of a son to offer up the religious rites has always been a matter of primary importance. Where no natural-born son exists, a substituted son takes his place. This naturally leads to the practice of adoption. But apart from all religious considerations, the advantages of having a son to assist a father

Law of adoption

(*l*) This was long since pointed out by Professor Wilson. See his Works, v. 14. Sir H. S. Maine has also had the hardihood to hint a disbelief of the doctrine. Village Communities, 53.

(*m*) Punjab Customs, 11.

(*n*) As to the whole of this, see chap. xvi. § 423, *et seq.*

in his life, to protect him in his old age, and to step into his property after death, would be equally felt, and are equally felt by other races. We know that the Sudras practised adoption, for even the Brahmanical writers provide special rules for their case. The inhabitants of the Punjab and N. W. Provinces, whether Hindus proper, Jains, Jats, Sikhs, or even Muhammedans, practise adoption, without religious rites, or the slightest reference to religious purposes. The same may be said of the Tamils in Ceylon. Even the Brahmanical works admit that the celebration of the name, and the perpetuation of the lineage, were sufficient reasons for affiliation, without reference to the rescue of the adopter's soul from Hell. In fact some of the very earliest instances mentioned are of the adoption of daughters. This latter practice is followed to the present day by the Bheels, certainly from no motives of piety, and by the Tamils of Ceylon. There can, I think, be no doubt that if the Aryans brought the habit of adoption with them into India, they also found it there already; and that the non-Aryan races, at all events, derive it from their own immemorial usage, and not from Brahmanical invention. There seems, also, every reason to believe, that even among the Aryan Hindus the importance now ascribed to adoption is comparatively recent. Little is to be found on the subject in the works of any but the most modern writers, and the majority of the ancient authors rank the adopted son very low among the subsidiary sons. The series of elaborate rules, which now limit the choice of a boy, are all the offspring of a metaphor; that he must be the reflection of a son. These rules may be appropriate enough to a system which requires the fiction of actual sonship for the proper performance of religious rites; but they have no bearing whatever upon affiliation, which has not this object in view, and, as we shall find, they are disregarded in many parts of India where the practice of adoption is strongly rooted. Yet the Brahmans have created the belief, that every adoption is intended to rescue the soul of a progenitor from Put, and that it must be judged of solely by its tendency to do so. And our tribunals gravely weigh the amount of religious conviction present to the minds of persons, not one of whom

probably connects the idea of religion with the act of adoption, more than with that of procreation (o).

§ 11. If I am right in the above views, it would follow that races who are Hindu by name, or even Hindu by religion (p), are not necessarily governed by any of the written treatises on law, which are founded upon and developed from the *Smritis*. Their usages may be very similar, but may be based on principles so different as to make the developments wholly inapplicable. Possibly all Brâhmans, however doubtful their pedigree, may be precluded, by a sort of estoppel, from denying the authority of the Brahmanical writings which are current in their district (q). But there can be no pretence for any such estoppel with regard to persons who are not only not Brâhmans, but not A'ryans. In one instance, a very learned judge, after discussing a question of inheritance among Tamil litigants, on the most technical principles of Sanskrit law, wound up his judgment by saying, "I must be allowed to add that I feel the grotesque absurdity of applying to these *Maravers* the doctrine of Hindu Law. It would be just as reasonable to give them the benefit of the Feudal Law of real property. At this late day it is however impossible to act upon one's consciousness of the absurdity" (r). I must own I cannot see the impossibility. In Northern and Western India the Courts have never considered themselves bound to apply these principles to sects who did not profess submission to the *Smritis*. In the case of the Jains, for instance, research has established that their usages, while closely resembling those of orthodox Hinduism, diverge exactly where they might be expected to do, from being based on secular and not on religious principles (s). The Bengal Court, as might be anticipated, is less tolerant of heresy. But it is certainly rather startling to find it assumed as a matter of course that the natives of Assam, the rudest of our provinces, are governed by the Hindu law as modified by Jîmûta Vâ-

Limited applicability of Sanskrit law.

(o) Manu gives a preference to the eldest son, on the ground that he alone has been begotten from a sense of duty, ix. § 106, 107. See this subject discussed at length, *post*, ch. v. § 90—93.

(p) Many of the Drâvidian races, who are called Hindus, are worshippers of snakes and devils, and are as indifferent to Vishnu and S'iva as the inhabitants of Whitechapel.

(q) See 7 Mad. H. C. 255.

(r) Holloway, J., 6 Mad. H. C. 341.

(s) *Post*, § 41.

hana (t). It would be curious to enquire whether there was any reason whatever for this belief, except the fact that appeals lay to the High Court of Bengal. It is a singular and suggestive circumstance that the Oriya chieftains of Orissa and Ganjam, who are identical in origin, language and religion, are supposed to follow different systems of law; the system ascribed to each being precisely that which is most familiar to the Courts to which they are judicially subject (u).

Brâhmanism has
modified usage.

§ 12. On the other hand, while I think that Brâhmanical law has been principally founded on non-Brâhmanical customs, so I have little doubt that those customs have been largely modified and supplemented by that law. Where two sets of usage, not wholly reconcilable, are found side by side, that which claims a divine origin has a great advantage in the struggle for existence over the other (x). Further, a more highly developed system of law has always a tendency to supplant one which is less developed. A very little law satisfies the wants of a rude community. As they advance in civilization, and new causes of dispute arise, they feel the necessity for new rules. If they have none of their own, they naturally borrow from their neighbours. Where evidence of custom is being given, it is not uncommon to find a native saying, "We observe our own rules. In a case where there is no rule we ask the pundits." Of course the pundit, with much complacency, produces from his *Çâstras* an answer which solves the difficulty. This is first adopted on his authority, and then becomes an accretion to the body of village usage. This process would of course be aided by the influence which the Brâhman always carry with them, by means of their intellectual superiority. It must have gone on with great rapidity during the last century, when so many disputes were referred to the decision of our Courts, and settled in those Courts solely in accordance with the opinions of the pundits (y).

Practical inferences.

§ 13. The practical result of this discussion, so far as it may

(t) *Deepo Debia v. Gobindo Deb*, 16 W. R. 42.

(u) See as to Orissa, note to *Bishenpiria v. Soogunda*, 1 S. D. 37 (49, 51). But in a case reported by Mr. MacNaghten from Orissa, in 1813, the *futwah* was certainly given according to *Mitâksharâ* law. 2 W. MacN. 306. As to Ganjam, see *Sri Ragunadha v. Sri Brozo Kishoro*, 3 I. A. 154.

(x) See Maine's *Vill. Com.* 52.

(y) See *post*, § 38.

turn out to be well founded, seems to be—First, that we should be very careful before we apply all the so-called Hindu law to all the so-called Hindus. Secondly, that in considering the applicability of that law, we should not be too strongly influenced by an undoubted similarity of usage. Thirdly, that we should be prepared to find that rules, such as rules of inheritance, adoption, and the like, may have been accepted from the Brâhmans by classes of persons who never accepted the principles or motives from which these rules originally sprung; and therefore, lastly, that we should not rashly infer that a usage which leads to necessary developments, when practised by Brâhmans, will lead to the same developments when practised by alien races. It will not do so, unless they have adopted the principle as well as the practice. Without both, the usage is merely a branch severed from the trunk. The sap is wanting, which can produce growth.

CHAPTER II.

THE SOURCES OF HINDU LAW.

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| 1. <i>The Smṛitis</i> , § 15. | 3. <i>Schools of Law</i> , § 33. |
| 2. <i>The Commentators</i> , § 25. | 4. <i>Judicial Decisions</i> , § 38. |

§ 14. I PROPOSE in this chapter to examine the sources of Hindu law, so far as they are to be found in the writings of the early Sanskrit sages and their commentators. A general reference to the accessible authorities on this branch of the subject is given below(a). I have not thought it necessary to give special references, unless where the statement in the text was still a matter of controversy; nor have I attempted to make a show of learning, which I do not possess, by referring at length to the works of Hindu writers of whom I know nothing but their names. Under this branch of the subject I shall offer some observations upon those differences of opinion which are generally spoken of as constituting various schools of law. I shall conclude by making some remarks upon the influence which our judicial system has exercised upon the natural development of Hindu Law. The important subject of Custom will be reserved for the next chapter.

§ 15. I. THE SMṚITIS.—The great difficulty which meets us in the study of Hindu Law, is to ascertain the date to which any particular statement should be referred. Chronology has

(a) See M. Müller's *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*; Dr. Bühler's *Introduction to the Digest of Hindu Law* by West and Bühler; Colebrooke's *Prefaces to the Dāya Bhāga* and the *Digest*, and his note, 1 *Str. H. L.* 315; the *Preface to Sir Thomas Strange's Hindu Law*; Dr. Burnell's *Prefaces to his translations of the Dāya Vibhāga and Varadrājah*, and the *Introduction to the first volume of Morley's Digest*; Stenzler's *Preface to his translation of Yājñavalkya*; Dr. Jolly's *Preface to Nārada*; Mayr, *Ind. Erbrecht*, 1—10, where the conclusions of Professor M. Müller and Dr. Bühler are adopted; Professor Monier William's *Indian Wisdom*.

absolutely no existence among Hindu writers. They deal in a vast, general way with cycles of fabulous length, which of course have no relation to anything real. It is impossible to ascertain when the earliest sages lived, or whether they ever lived. Most of the recorded names are probably purely mythical. Tradition is of no value when it has a fable for its source. Names of indefinite antiquity are assumed by comparatively recent writers, or editors, or collectors of texts. Even when we can ascertain the sequence of certain works, it is unsafe to assume that any statement of law represented an existing fact. To a Hindu writer every sacred text is equally true. Maxims which have long since ceased to correspond with actual life are reproduced, either without comment, or with non-natural interpretation. Extinct usages are detailed without a suggestion that they are extinct, from an idea that it is sacrilegious to omit anything that has once found a place in Holy Writ. In short we have exactly the same difficulty in dealing with our materials as a palæontologist would find, if all the archaic organisms which he compares had been discovered, not reposing in their successive strata, but jumbled together in a museum.

Chronology non-existent.

§ 16. The two great categories of primeval authority are the *Çruti* and the *Smṛiti*. The *Çruti* is that which was seen or perceived in a revelation, and includes the four Vedas. The *Smṛiti* is the recollection handed down by the Rishis, or sages of antiquity (b). The former is of divine, the latter of human origin. Where the two conflict, if such a conflict is conceivable, the latter must give way. Practically, however, the *Çruti* has little or no legal value. It contains no statements of law, as such, though its statements of facts are occasionally referred to as conclusive evidence of a legal usage. Rules, as distinct from instances, of conduct are for the first time embodied in the *Smṛiti*. The *Smṛiti*, again, are found on examination to fall under two heads, viz., works written in prose, or in prose and verse mixed, and works written wholly in verse. The latter class of writings, being fuller and clearer, are generally meant when the term *Smṛiti* is used, but it properly includes both classes. To Professor

Çruti and
Smṛiti.

(b) Manu, ii. § 9, 10.

Max Müller we owe the important generalisation, that the former, as a rule, are older than the latter. His views may be summarised as follows (c).

Sûtras.

§ 17. The first duty of a Brâhman was to study the Vedas. These were orally transmitted for many ages before they were committed to writing, and orally taught, as they are even at the present time (d). Naturally many various versions of the same Veda arose, and sects or schools were formed, headed by distinguished teachers who taught from these various versions. To facilitate their teaching they framed *Sûtras*, or strings of rules, chiefly in prose, which formed rather a *memoria technica* by which the substance of the oral lessons might be recalled, than a regular treatise on the subject. Every department of the Vedas had its own *Sûtras*. Those which related to the rules of practical life, or law, were known as the *Dharma-Sûtras*, and these last again were as varied as the sects, or *Charaṇas*, from which they originated, and bore the names of the teachers by whom they were actually composed, or whose views they were supposed to embody. Thus the *Dharma-Sûtras* which bear the name of A'pastamba, Baudhâyana, Gautama and the like, contain the substance of the rules of law imparted in the *Charaṇas*, which recognized those teachers as their heads or which had adopted those names. Works of this class are known to have existed more than two hundred years before our era. Professor Max Müller places the *Sûtra* period roughly as ranging from B.C. 600–200. But the composition of these works may have continued longer, and it cannot be asserted of any particular *Sûtra* now in existence that it is of the age above specified.

Relative age of
Sûtras.

§ 18. Portions of the *Dharma-Sûtras* which bear the names of A'pastamba, Baudhâyana, Gautama, Vaṣishṭha and Viṣṇu, have been translated by Dr. Bühler, and are to be found at the end of the first volume of West and Bühler. Texts from each of these Collections are also found in Colebrooke's Digest. As to their relative antiquity, Dr. Bühler says that according to tradition Baudhâyana is older than

(c) See his letter to Mr. Morley, 1 M. Dig. Introd. 196; A. S. Lit., pp. 125–134, 260, 377; W. & B. Introd. 16.

(d) See as to the introduction of writing, A. S. Lit. 497; Ind. Wisdom, 252.

Apastamba, and Gautama is older than Vaṣishṭha, as the latter quotes the former. The Vishṇu-Sûtra he considers to have been recast by those who, ignorant of its origin, wished to attribute it to the God Vishṇu. Hârîta, Uçanas, Kaçyapa, and Çankha, all of whom are quoted in Colebrooke's Digest and by the Commentators, are also of the Sûtra period (e).

§ 19. The Dharma-Çâstras, which are wholly in verse, Professor Max Müller considers to be merely metrical versions of previously-existing Dharma-Sûtras. Dr. Bühler, after pointing out "that almost in every branch of Hindu science, where we find text books in prose and in verse, the latter are only recent redactions of works of the former class," proceeds to say, "This view may be supported by some other general reasons. Firstly, if we take off the above-mentioned Introductions, the contents of the poetical Dharma-Çâstras agree entirely with those of the Dharma-Sûtras, whilst the arrangement of the subject-matter differs only slightly, not more than the Dharma-Sûtras differ amongst each other. Secondly, the language of the poetical Dharma-Sûtras and Dharma-Çâstras is nearly the same. Both show archaic forms, and in many instances the same. Thirdly, the poetical Dharma-Çâstras contain many of the Çlokas or Gâthâs given in the Dharma-Sûtras, and some in an apparently modified form. Instances of the former kind are exceedingly numerous. A comparison of the Gâthâs from Vaṣishṭha, Baudhâyana, Apastamba and Hiranyakeçin with the Manusmṛiti, shows that more than a hundred of the former are incorporated in the latter." And he goes on to point out other instances in which passages of Manus are only modernised versions of passages now existing in Vaṣishṭha's Sûtra. In one case Manus (viii. § 140) quotes Vaṣishṭha on a question of lawful interest, and the passage so quoted is still extant in the Sûtras of that author. The result in Dr. Bühler's opinion is that "it would seem probable that Dharma-Çâstras, like that ascribed to Manus and Yâjñavalkya, are versifications of older Sûtras, though they, in their turn, may be older than some of the Sûtra works which have come down to our times" (f). A third work of a similar class is that known by the name of Nârada. All of these are now

Dharma-Çâstras
generally more
recent.

(e) W. & B. Introd. 20—23.

(f) W. & B. Introd. 24—26.

accessible to English readers (*g*). As to relative age they rank in the order in which they are named. Their actual age is a matter upon which even proximate certainty is unattainable.

Manu.

§ 20. The Code of Manu has always been treated by Hindu sages and commentators, from the earliest times, as being of paramount authority; an opinion, however, which does not prevent them from treating it as obsolete whenever occasion requires (*h*). No better proof could be given of its antiquity. Whether it gained its reputation from its intrinsic merits, or from its alleged sacred origin; or whether its sacred origin was ascribed to it, in consequence of its age and reputation, we cannot determine. The personality of its author, as described in the work itself, is upon its face mythical. The sages implore Manu to inform them of the sacred laws, and he, after relating his own birth from Brâhma, and giving an account of the creation of the world, states that he received the Code from Brâhma, and communicated it to the ten sages, and requests Bhṛigu, one of the ten, to repeat it to the other nine, who had apparently forgotten it. The rest of the work is then admittedly recited, not by Manu but by Bhṛigu (*i*). Manu, the ancestor of mankind, was not an individual, but simply the impersonal and representative man. What is certain is, that among the Brâhmanical schools was one known as the School of the Mânava, and that they used as their text for teaching a series of Sûtras, entitled the Mânava-Sûtras. The Dharma-Sûtras of this series are unfortunately lost, but it may be supposed that they were the concentrated essence from which the Mânava Dharma-Çâstras were distilled. Whether the sect took its name from a real teacher called Manu, or from the mythical being, cannot now be known (*k*).

His age.

§ 21. The age of the work in its present form is placed by

(*g*) Yājñavalkya has been wholly translated in German by Professor Stenzler (1849). An English translation of the whole of the 2nd book, and of part of the 1st, has been made by Dr. Roer (Calcutta, 1859). Vṛihaspati, whom Dr. Bühler classes in the same category, is only known by fragments cited by the commentators, and by Jagannâtha in his Digest.

(*h*) See Preface by Sir W. Jones, p. 11, and general note at the end, p. 363 (London, 1796).

(*i*) Manu, i. § 1—60, 119, iii. § 16, viii. § 204, xii. § 1. This fiction of recital by an early sage is a sort of common form in Hindu works of no great antiquity. W. & B. *Introd.* 21.

(*k*) A. S. Lit. 532; 1 M. Dig. *Introd.* 197; W. & B. *Introd.* 27; Ind. *Wisd.* 213.

Sir W. Jones at 1280 B.C., by Schlegel at about 1000 B.C., by Mr. Elphinstone at about 900 B.C., and by Professor M. Williams at about the 5th century B.C. (*l*). Professor Max Müller would apparently place it as a post-Vedic work, at a date not earlier than 200 B.C. (*m*). One of his reasons for this view, viz., that the continuous çlokas in which it is written did not come into use until after that date, has been shown not to be beyond doubt, as Professor Goldstücker has established their existence at an earlier period (*n*). Dr. Bühler, however, points out that it is idle to discuss the date at which the work was originally composed, when it is evident that what we now possess has been repeatedly remodelled from its original form. The introduction to Nârada states that the work of Manu originally consisted of 1000 chapters and 100,000 çlokas. Nârada abridged it to 12,000 çlokas, and Sumati again reduced it to 4000. The treatise which we possess must be a third abridgment, as it only extends to 2685. We also find a *Vṛiddha*, or old, Manu quoted, as well as a *Bṛihant*, or great, Manu. Further, while the existing Manu quotes from Vâsishta a rule which is actually found in his treatise, Vâsishta in turn quotes from Manu verses, two of which are found still, and two are not found, one of these latter being in a metre unknown to our Manu. Obviously the interval between the Manu quoted by Vâsishta, and the Manu who quotes Vâsishta, must be very considerable. Further, Baudhâyana quotes Manu for a proposition exactly the reverse of that now stated by him (ix. § 89). Even in a work so late as the 6th century A.D., verses are cited from Manu which can only be found in part in the existing work (*o*). The same fact would be apparent, as a matter of internal evidence, from the contradictions in the code itself. For instance, it is impossible to reconcile the precepts as to eating flesh meat (*p*), or as to the second marriage of women (*q*). Even as regards men, some passages seem to indicate that a man could not marry again during the life of his first wife, while in others second marriages are expressly recognized and

Various versions.

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(*l*) Ind. Wisd. 215; Elphinstone, 227; Stenz., Pref. to Yājñavalkya, 10.

(*m*) A. S. Lit. 61, 244.

(*n*) W. & B. Introd. 24.

(*o*) W. & B. Introd. 16 n.

(*p*) Manu, iv. § 250, v. § 7—57, xi. § 156—159.

(*q*) Manu, v. § 157, § 160—163, ix. § 65, 76, 175, 176, 191.

regulated (*r*). So the texts which refer to the marriage of a Brâhman with a Çûdra woman (*s*), and to the procreation of children upon a widow for the benefit of the husband (*t*), are evidently of different periods.

Yâjñavalkya.

§ 22. Next to Manu in date and authority is Yâjñavalkya. No Sûtras corresponding to it have been discovered, and the work is considered by Professor Stenzler to have been founded on that of Manu. It has been the subject of numerous commentaries, the most celebrated of which is the Mitâksharâ, and is practically the starting point of Hindu law for those provinces which are governed by the latter. Of the actual author nothing is known. A Yâjñavalkya is mentioned as the person who received the White or Yajur Veda from the Sun, and this mythical personage is apparently put forward as the author of the law-book. Of course the two works are widely distant in point of time, but Dr. Bühler is disposed to think that the Dharma-Çâstras, known by the name of Yâjñavalkya, may have been based on Sûtras which proceeded from the school which followed the Vedic author, or perhaps even from that author himself (*u*). This of course is mere conjecture. As in the case of Manu, an "old" and a "great" Yâjñavalkya are spoken of, evidencing the existence of several editions of the same work. Its date can only be determined approximately within wide limits. It is undoubtedly much later than Manu, as is shown by references to the worship of Gaṇeça and the planets, to the use of deeds on metal plates, and the endowment of monasteries, while other passages, speaking of bald heads and yellow robes, are supposed to be allusions to the Buddhists (*x*). Professor Wilson points out that "passages taken from it have been found on inscriptions in every part of India, dated in the tenth and eleventh centuries. To have been so widely diffused, and to have then attained a general character as an authority, a considerable time must have elapsed, and the work must date therefore long prior to those inscriptions." He considers that the mention of a coin,

His age.

(*r*) Manu, v. § 167, viii. § 204, ix. § 77—87, 101, 102.

(*s*) Manu, iii. § 13—19, ix. § 148—155, 178, x. § 64—67.

(*t*) Manu, ix. § 56—66, 120, 143, 162—165, 167, 190, 191, 203.

(*u*) Yâj. i. § 1, iii. § 110; A. S. Lit. 329; W. & B. Introd. 28.

(*x*) Yâj., i. § 270, 271, 272, 284, 318, ii. § 185.

Nanaka, which occurs in Yâjñavalkya, refers to one of the coins of Kanerki, and therefore establishes a date later than 200 A.D. This inference, however, is considered by Professor Max Müller to be very doubtful. Passages from Yâjñavalkya are found in the Pañchatantra, which cannot be more modern than the end of the fifth century (*y*), and it is quoted wholesale in the Agni Purâṇa, which is supposed to be earlier than the eighth century (*z*). It seems therefore tolerably certain that the work is more than 1,400 years old, but how much older it is impossible to state.

§ 23. The last of the complete metrical Dharma-Çastras Nârada. which we possess is the Nârada-Smṛiti; part of which is to be found in the first volume of West & Bühler; and the whole of which has been very recently translated by Dr. Jolly. The work, as usual, is ascribed to the divine sage Nârada, and purports to have been abstracted by him from the second abridgment of Manu in 4000 ṣlokas. It differs from Manu, however, in many most important respects, which are enumerated by Dr. Bühler and Dr. Jolly. One point of even greater importance than any mentioned by them, is the rank he gives to the adopted son. Manu places him third in the order of sons, and Nârada places him ninth, thereby excluding him from the list of collateral heirs (*a*). It is, of course, possible (and I think probable) that in this respect Nârada may be really following what was the original and genuine text of Manu. With this exception, if it be one, the whole of Nârada is marked by a modern air as compared with Manu. Some of his rules for procedure in particular, seem to anticipate the English principles of special pleading (*b*). The same mode of comparison also establishes that Nârada is more recent than Yâjñavalkya. On the other hand, his age is so much greater than that of the Mitâksharâ, that he is not only quoted throughout that work, but quoted as one of the inspired writers. His views also appear to be of a more ancient character than those announced by Kâtyâyana, Vṛihaspati, Yâma, and other Smṛitis referred to by the com-

(*y*) Wilson's Works, iv. 89.

(*z*) Wilson's Works, iii. 87, 90. See Stenzler's Preface, 10; A. S. Lit. 330.

(*a*) Manu, ix. § 159; Nâr. xiii. § 46.

(*b*) See Nâr. i. § 50-57.

His age.

mentators. The result, according to Dr. Jolly, is, that the Nārada-Smṛiti should be placed about the 5th or 6th century, or perhaps a little later; that is to say, about mid-way between Yājñavalkya and the time when the Smṛitis ceased to be composed. No different versions of the work are ever quoted.

Secondary
Smṛitis.

§ 24. Of still later date than Nārada, is a class of Smṛitis, which are described by Dr. Bühler as “secondary redactions of metrical Dharma-Çāstras.” Under this head he enumerates “the various Smṛitis which go under the names of Angiras, Atri, Daksha, Devala, Prajâpati, Yâma, Likhita, Vyâsa, Çankha, Çankha Likhita, Vṛiddha-Çâtâtapa. All these works are very small and of little significance. That they are really extracts from, or modern versions of more extensive treatises, and not simply forgeries, as has been supposed, seems to follow from this, that some of the verses quoted by the older commentators of Yājñavalkya and Manu, such as Vijñaneśvara, are actually found in them, whilst they cannot be the original works which those lawyers had before them, because other verses quoted are not found in them. In the case of the Vṛiddha-Çâtâtapa-Smṛiti, the author himself states in the beginning, that he only gives an extract from the larger work” (c). Of course, the texts contained in these works may be very ancient, though the editions which contain them are comparatively modern. Many of the names in the above list are actually enumerated by Yājñavalkya as original sources of law (d). They must, therefore, have existed, though not in their present shape, long before his time.

Authority of
Smṛitis.

§ 25. II. THE COMMENTATORS.—All the works which come under the head of Smṛitis agree in this—that they claim, and are admitted to possess an independent authority. One Smṛiti occasionally quotes another, as one Judge cites the opinion of another Judge, but every part of the work has the same weight, and is regarded as the utterance of infallible

(c) W. & B. Introd. 29. For complete list of the Smṛitis, see *ibid.* 13; 1 Morl. Dig. 193; Stokes, H. L. B. 5; Ind. Wisd. 211.

(d) “Manu, Atri, Vishnu, Hārta, Yājñavalkya, Usanas, Angiras, Yâma, Apastamba, Samvarta, Katyâyana, Vrihaspati, Parâçara, Vyâsa, Çankha Likhita, Daksha, Gautama, Çâtâtapa, and Vasishthha, are they who have promulgated Dharma-Çāstras.” Yāj. i. § 4, 5.

truth. No doubt these Smṛitis exhibit the greatest difference in their statements, owing to the lapse of time, and probably in part to local peculiarities. Parâçara, one of the latest of this class, recognized this difference, and its cause, and is recorded as laying down that the Institutes of Manu were appropriate to the *Kṛita Yuga*, or first age; those of Gautama to the *Treta*, or second age; those of Çankha and Likhita to the *Dvâpara*, or third age; and his own to the *Kali*, or sinful age, which still continues (*e*). Unhappily, the legal portion of his work, which we may imagine was founded on some attempt at historical principles, has disappeared. Later writers assume that the Smṛitis constitute a single body of law, one part of which supplements the other, and every part of which, if properly understood, is capable of being reconciled with the other (*f*). To a certain extent this may, perhaps, be true, as none of the Dharma-Sûtras, or Dharma-Çâstras, purport to cover the whole body of law (*g*). But the variances between them are not, and could not in the nature of things be reconcilable. The unquestioning acceptance of the whole mass of Smṛitis in bulk, could only arise—first, when their antiquity had become so great that the real facts which they represented had been forgotten, and that a halo of semi-divinity had encircled their authors; and, secondly, when the existing law had come to rest on an independent foundation of belief, so as to be able to maintain itself in defiance of the authorities on which it was based. A direct analogy may be found in modern theology, where systems of the most conflicting nature are all referred to the same documents, which are equally at variance with each other and with the dogmas which they are made to support.

Their antiquity.

§ 26. Far the weightiest of all the commentaries is that by Vijñaneśvara, known as the *Mitâksharâ* (*h*). Its authority is

(*e*) 1 Stra. H. L. Pref. 12. Manu, as we now possess it, mentions all four ages. i. § 81—86.

(*f*) It seems doubtful whether Manu considered that any texts except those of the Vedas were necessarily true, and therefore reconcilable. See ii. § 14, 15.

(*g*) W. & B. Introd. 3, 32; Stenz. Preface, 6.

(*h*) The portion of this work which treats of Inheritance is familiar to students by Mr. Colebrooke's translation. The portion on Judicial Procedure has been translated by Mr. W. MacNaghten, and forms the latter part of the first volume of his work on Hindu law. A table of contents of the entire work will be found at the end of the first volume of Borrodaile's Reports (folio, 1825).

Mitāksharā.

supreme in the City and Province of Benares, and it stands at the head of the works referred to as settling the law in the South and West of India. It is the basis of the works which set out the law in Mithila. In Bengal alone it is to a certain extent superseded by the writings of Jīmûta Vâhana and his followers, while in Guzerat the Mayûkha is accepted in preference to it, in the very few points on which they differ (*i*). His age has been fixed by recent research to be the latter part of the eleventh century (*k*). His work is followed, with occasional though slight variances, by the writers to whom special weight is attributed in the other provinces.

Authorities in
Southern India.

§ 27. The principal of these works in Southern India are the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, the Dâya-Vibhâga, the Sarasvâti Vilâsa, and the Vyavahâra Nirṇâya. The Smṛiti Chandrikâ was written by Devaṇḍa Bhaṭṭa, during the existence of the Vijayanâgara dynasty in the Deccan, and his date is stated by Dr. Burnell to have been about the middle of the 13th century. He was also the author of the well-known treatise on adoption, the Dattaka Chandrikâ. The latter has been translated by Mr. Sutherland. The only translation of the former as yet published is that by Kristnasawmy Iyer; Madras, 1867. Dr. Goldstûcker is stated by Dr. Burnell (*l*) to have left an edition and translation ready for the press, but it appears never to have been printed. The Sarasvâti-Vilâsa was written about 1320 A.D., and is attributed to one of the princes who ruled in the northern part of the Carnatic. It is said to exhibit the influence of Muhammedan notions especially in reference to the tenure of land (*m*). A translation by Dr. Burnell has been long since promised. To him we owe translations of the two other works above mentioned. The Dâya-Vibhâga was written by Mâdhavîya, who was prime minister of several kings of the Vijayanâgara dynasty, and who flourished during the latter half of the 14th century. The Vyavahâra-Nirṇâya was written by Varadrâja, of whom his editor remarks, "it is impossible to say any more than that he was probably a native of the Tamil country, and lived at the end of the 16th or beginning of the 17th century."

(i) Colebrooke's note, 1 Stra. H. L. 317; 12 Bomb. H. C. 65.

(k) W. & B. Preface iv.

(l) Pref. to Varadrâja.

(m) 1 Stra. H. L. Pref. 17.

§ 28. The works which supplement the Mitâksharâ in Western India. Western India are the Vyavahâra Mayûkha, and the Vîramitrodaya. Of these, the Mitâksharâ ranks first and paramount in the Maratha country and in Northern Kanara, while in Guzerat, and apparently also in the Island of Bombay, the Mayûkha is considered as the over-ruling authority when there is a difference of opinion (*n*). The Mayûkha has been translated by Mr. Borrodaile. It is written by Nîlakaṇṭha, whose family appears to have been of Malharatta origin, but settled in Benares. He lived about 1600 A.D.; and his works came into general use about 1700. The Vîramitrodaya was written by Mitra Miśra, and, like the Mayûkha, follows the Mitâksharâ in most points. Its composition may be assigned to the beginning of the 17th century (*o*). A portion of it has been translated by Dr. Bühler, and will be found in the second part of the Bombay Digest. Other works of authority in Western India are mentioned by Dr. Bühler in his Introduction, but being untranslated I have not referred to them any further.

§ 29. In Mithila (or Tirhut and North Behar) the Mitâksharâ is also an authority, though the Pundits of that district appear to be in the habit rather of referring to the Vivâda Chintâmaṇi and Vyavahâra Chintâmaṇi of Vachespâti Miśra, whose laws they say "are to this day venerated above all others by the Mithilas;" the Retnâkara and the Vivâda Chandra (*p*). The date of the former is put by Mr. Colebrooke, writing in 1796, as ten or twelve generations previously, that is about the middle of the 15th century. The Vivâda Chintâmaṇi has been translated by Prossonno Coomar Tagore. Of the other works I only know the name.

§ 30. The two special works on adoption, viz., the Dattaka Chandrikâ by Devaṇḍa Bhaṭṭa, and the Dattaka Mîmâṃsâ by Nanda Paṇḍita, appear also to have a general currency, subject to the local differences which will be noticed under that head. Of these works the former was the earlier, and the latter is supposed to have been written as an expansion, and

(*n*) W. & B. Introd. 2, 3; 12 Bomb. H. C. 65; I. L. R., 2 Bomb., 418.

(*o*) W. & B. Preface, iv.

(*p*) 2 M. I. A. 134, 146; Coleb. Pref. to Dig. 19.

in some respects as a refutation of its doctrines. Where the works differ, it is said that the Dattaka Chandrikâ has more authority in Bengal, and the Dattaka Mîmânsâ in Benares (*q*). When Mr. Sutherland translated these treatises, he lamented that he could find out nothing about their authors, except that they were both writers of Southern India. I cannot discover that any one knows more of Nanda Paṇḍita at the present time.

Authorities in
Bengal.

§ 31. In Bengal the Mitâksharâ and the works which follow it have no authority, except upon points where the law of that province is in harmony with the rest of India. In respect to all the points on which they disagree, the treatise of Jimûta Vâhana is the starting point, just as that of Vijñâneśvara is elsewhere. Little is known of either his identity or his age. Many portions of his work are supposed to be a refutation of the Mitâksharâ, and he is expressly named and followed by Raghunandana who lived in the beginning of the 16th century. His date therefore must fall between the latter period, and whatever time may be assigned to Vijñâneśvara (*r*). His authority must have been overpowering, as no attempt seems ever to have been made to question his views except in minute details; and the principal works of the Bengal lawyers since his time have consisted in commentaries on his treatise. Particulars of these works will be found in Mr. Colebrooke's Prefaces to the Dâya Bhâga and to Jagannâtha's Digest. The only other work of the Bengal school which I know of in an English form is the Dâya-Krama-Sangraha by Sri Kṛishṇa Tarkâlankâra, translated by Mr. Wynch. It is very modern, its author having lived in the beginning of the last century, but it is considered as of high authority. It follows and develops the peculiarly Brahmanical views of the Dâya Bhâga.

Halhed's Code.

§ 32. Before quitting this part of the subject, a few words should be said as regards two digests made under European influence. I mean the *Vivâdarnava Setu*, compiled at the request of Warren Hastings, and commonly known as Halhed's Gentoo Code, from the name of its translator; and the *Vivada bhangarnava*, compiled at the instance of Sir William Jones by Jagannâtha Terkapunchanana, and translated by Mr. Cole-

(*q*) 1 W. MacN. 74.

(*r*) See *ante*. § 26.

brooke, which is generally spoken of as Jagannâtha's or Colebrooke's Digest. The former work, in its English garb, is quite worthless. It was translated by Mr. Halhed, not from the original Sanskrit, of which he was ignorant, but from a Persian version supplied to him by his interpreter, which Sir W. Jones describes as "a loose injudicious epitome of the original Sanskrit, in which abstract many essential passages are omitted, though several notes of little consequence are interpolated, from a vain idea of elucidating or improving the text" (s). No such drawback exists in the case of the latter work, which was translated by one who was not only the greatest Sanskrit scholar, but the greatest Sanskrit lawyer whom England has ever produced. But Mr. Colebrooke himself early hinted a disapproval of Jagannâtha's labours as abounding with frivolous disquisitions, and as discussing together the discordant opinions maintained by the lawyers of the several schools, without distinguishing which of them is the received doctrine of each school, or whether any of them actually prevail at present. This feature drew down upon the Digest the criticism of being "the best law-book for a Counsel and the worst for a Judge" (t). On the other hand, Mr. Justice Dwarkanath Mitter, who was of the greatest eminence as a Bengal lawyer, lately pronounced a high eulogium upon Jagannâtha and his work, of whom he says: "I venture to affirm that, with the exception of the three leading writers of the Bengal school,—namely, the author of the *Dâya Bhâga*, the author of the *Dâyatatwa*, and the author of the *Dâya-krama-sangraha*,—the authority of Jagannâtha Turkopuñchanana, is, so far as that school is concerned, higher than that of any other writer on Hindu law, living or dead, not even excluding Mr. Colebrooke himself" (u). It certainly seems to me that Jagannâtha's work has fallen into rather undeserved odium. As a repository of ancient texts, many of which are nowhere else accessible to the English reader, it is simply invaluable. His own Commentary is marked by the minute balancing of conflict-

(s) Pref. to Colebrooke's Digest, 10.

(t) Pref. to Digest, 11; Pref. to *Dâya Bhâga*; 2 Stra. H. L. 176; Pref. to Stra. H. L. 18.

(u) 13 B. L. R. 50.

ing views which is common to all Hindu lawyers. But as he always gives the names of his authorities, a very little trouble will enable the reader to ascertain to what school of law they belong. His own opinion, whenever it can be ascertained, may generally be relied on as representing the orthodox view of the Bengal school.

Only two schools
of law.

§ 33. III. DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF LAW.—The term “school of law,” as applied to the different legal opinions prevalent in different parts of India, seems to have been first used by Mr. Colebrooke (*x*). He points out that there really are only two schools marked by a vital difference of opinion, viz., those who follow the Mitāksharâ, and those who follow the Dâya Bhâga. Those who fall under the former head are again divided by minor differences of opinion, but are in principle substantially the same. Of course in every part of India, though governed by practically the same law, the pundits refer by preference to the writers who lived nearest to, and are best known to themselves. Just as English, Irish and American lawyers refer to their own authorities, when attainable, on any point of general jurisprudence. This has given rise to the idea that there are as many schools of law as there are sets of local writers, and the subdivision has been carried to an extent for which it is impossible to suggest any reason or foundation. For instance, Mr. Morley speaks of a Bengal, a Mithilâ, a Benares, a Mâhârâshtra and a Drâviḍa School, and subdivides the latter into a Drâviḍa, a Kaṇṇāṭaka and an Andhra division (*y*). So the Madras High Court and the Judicial Committee distinguish between the Benares and the Drâviḍa schools of law (*z*), and a distinction between an Andhra and a Drâviḍa School has also received a sort of quasi-recognition (*a*). On the other hand, Dr. Burnell ridicules the use of the terms Kaṇṇāṭaka and Andhra, which he declares to be wholly destitute of meaning, while the term Drâviḍian has a very good philological sense, but no legal signification whatever. Practically he agrees with Mr. Cole-

(*x*) 1 Stra. H. L. 315. As to the mode in which such divergences sprung up, see the remarks of the Judicial Committee in the *Ramnaad case*, 12 M. I. A. 435.

(*y*) 1 M. Dig. Introd. 221.

(*z*) See the *Ramnaad adoption suit*, 2 Mad. H. C. 206 ; 12 M. I. A. 397.

(*a*) 1 Mad. H. C. 420.

brooke in thinking that the only distinction of real importance is between the followers of the Mitâksharâ and the followers of the Dâya Bhâga (b).

§ 34. In discussing this subject, it seems to me that we must distinguish between differences of law arising from differences of opinion among the Sanskrit writers, and differences of law arising from the fact that their opinions have never been received at all, or only to a limited extent. In the former case there are really different schools of law ; in the latter case there are simply no schools. I think it will be found that the differences between the law of Bengal and Benares come under the former head, while the local variances which exist in the Punjâb, in Western and in Southern India, come under the latter head.

Causes of
variance.

§ 35. Any one who compares the Dâya Bhâga with the Mitâksharâ will observe that the two works differ in the most vital points, and that they do so from the conscious application of completely different principles. These will be discussed in their appropriate places through this work, but may be shortly summarised here.

The Dâya Bhâga.

First, the Dâya Bhâga lays down the principle of religious efficacy as the ruling canon in determining the order of succession ; consequently it rejects the preference of agnates to cognates, which distinguishes the other systems, and arranges and limits the cognates upon principles peculiar to itself (c).

Secondly, it wholly denies the doctrine that property is by birth, which is the corner-stone of the joint family system. Hence it treats the father as the absolute owner of the property, and authorises him to dispose of it at his pleasure. It also refuses to recognize any right in the son to a partition during his father's life (d).

Thirdly, it considers the brothers, or other collateral members of the joint family, as holding their shares in quasi-severalty, and consequently recognizes their right to dispose of them at their pleasure, while still undivided (e).

(b) Pref. to Varadrâjah, 5 ; Nelson's View of Hindu Law, 21.

(c) See post, § 423, *et seq.*

(d) See post, § 221, 232.

(e) See post, § 238.

Fourthly, whether as a result of the last principle, or upon independent grounds, it recognizes the right of a widow in an undivided family to succeed to her husband's share, if he dies without issue, and to enforce a partition on her own account (*f*).

Factum valet.

It is usual to speak of the doctrine *Factum valet* as one of universal application in the Bengal school. But this is a mistake. When it suits Jîmûta Vâhana, he uses it as a means of getting over a distinct prohibition against alienation by a father without the permission of his sons (*g*). I am not aware of his applying the doctrine in any other case. No Bengal lawyer would admit of any such subterfuge as sanctioning, for instance, the right of an undivided brother to dispose of more than his own share in the family property for his private benefit, or as authorising a widow to adopt without her husband's consent, or a boy to be adopted after *upanâyana* or marriage. The principle is only applied where a legal precept has been already reduced by independent reasoning to a moral suggestion.

Females in
Western India.

§ 36. Now in all the above points, the remaining parts of India agree with each other in disagreeing with Jîmûta Vâhana and his followers. Their variances *inter se* are comparatively few and slight. Far the most important is the difference which exists between Western India and the other provinces which follow the Mitâksharâ, as to the right of females to inherit. A sister, for instance, who is nowhere else recognized as an heir, ranks very high in the order of succession in the Bombay Presidency, and many other heiresses are admitted, who would have no *locus standi* elsewhere (*h*). Any reader of Indian history will have observed the public and prominent position assumed by Mahratta Princesses, and it seems probable that the doctrine which prevails in other districts, that women are incapable of inheriting without a special text, has never been received at all in Western India. Women inherit there, not by reason of, but in defiance of the rules which regulate their admission

(*f*) See *post*, § 239, 403.

(*g*) Dâya Bhâga. ii. § 30.

(*h*) Vyavahâra Mayûkha iv. 8, § 19 ; 1 W. & B. 183—185.

elsewhere. In their case, written law has never superseded immemorial custom (*i*).

§ 37. Another matter as to which there is much variance is the law of adoption. For instance, as regards the right of a widow to adopt a son to her deceased husband. In Mithilâ no widow can adopt. In Bengal and Benares she can, with her husband's permission. In Southern India, and in the Punjâb, she can adopt, even without his permission, by the consent of his sapinḍas. In Western India she can adopt without any consent (*k*). So as regards the person to be adopted. The adoption of a daughter's or a sister's son is forbidden to the higher classes by the Sanskrit writers. It is legal in the Punjâb. It is commonly practised, though it has been lately pronounced to be illegal, in the South of India (*l*). In all these cases we may probably trace a survival of ancient practices which existed before adoption had any religious significance, unfettered by the rules which were introduced when it became a religious rite. The similarity of usage on these points between the Punjâb and the South of India seems to me strongly to confirm this view. It is quite certain that neither borrowed from the other. It is also certain that in the Punjâb adoption is a purely secular arrangement. There seems strong reason to suppose that in Southern India it is nothing more (*m*). But what is of importance with regard to the present discussion is, that these differences find no support in the writings of the early sages, or even of the early commentators. They appear for the first time in treatises which are absolutely modern, or merely in recorded customs. To speak of such variances as arising from different schools of law, would be to invert the relation of cause and effect. We might just as well invent different schools of law for Kent and Middlesex, to account for Gavelkind and the Customs of London. Even Hindu lawyers cannot alter facts. In some instances they try to

(*i*) See *post*, § 437, 452—454, 473, 501.

(*k*) See *post*, § 99.

(*l*) See *post*, § 118, 119.

(*m*) See *post*, § 93.

wrest some holy precept into conformity with the facts (*n*) ; but in other cases, and especially in Western India, the facts are too stubborn. The more closely we study the works of the different so-called schools of law, other than those of Bengal, the more shall we be convinced that the principles of all are precisely the same. The local usages of the different districts vary. Some of these usages the writers struggle to bring within their rules ; others they silently abandon as hopeless. What they cannot account for, they simply ignore (*o*).

Influence of
English Judges.

§ 38. IV. JUDICIAL DECISIONS.—A great deal has been said, often by no means in a flattering spirit, of the decisions upon Native Law of our Courts, whether presided over by civilian or by professional Judges. It seems to be supposed that they imported European notions into the questions discussed before them, and that the divergences between the law which they administered, and that which is to be found in the Sanskrit law-books, are to be ascribed to their influence. In one or two remarkable instances, no doubt, this was the case, but those instances are rare. My belief is that their influence was exerted in the opposite direction, and that it rather showed itself in the pedantic maintenance of doctrines whose letter was still existing, but whose spirit was dying away. It could hardly have been otherwise. It seems to be forgotten that upon all disputed points of law, the English Judges were merely the mouthpieces of the pundits who were attached to their Courts, and whom they were bound to consult (*p*). The slightest examination of the earliest reports at a time when all points of law were treated as open questions, will show that the pundits were invariably consulted, wherever a doubt arose, and that their opinions were for a long time implicitly followed. If then the decisions were not in accordance with Hindu law, the fault rested with the pundits, and not with the Judges. The tendency of the

The Pundits.

(*n*) See, for instance, the mode in which four conflicting views as to the right of a widow to adopt have been deduced from a single text of *Vaśiṣṭa*, 12 M. I. A. 435.

(*o*) For instance, second marriages of widows or wives, which are equally practised in the North, the West, and the South of India, see *post*, § 87.

(*p*) The pundits, as official referees of the Courts, were only abolished by Act XI. of 1864.

former would naturally be to magnify the authority of their own law-books ; and accordingly we find that they invariably quote some text in support of their opinion, even when the text had no bearing whatever upon the point. The tendency of the latter was even more strongly in the same direction. The pundit, however bigoted he might be, was at all events a Hindu, living amongst Hindus, and advising upon a law which actually governed the every-day lives of himself and his family and his friends. He would torture a sacred text into an authority for his opinion ; but his opinion would probably be right, though unsustained by, or even opposed to his text. With the English Judge there was no such restraining influence. He was sworn to administer Hindu law to the Hindus, and he was determined to do so, however strange or unreasonable it might appear. At first he accepted his law unhesitatingly from the lips of the pundits, and so long as he did so, probably no great harm was done. But knowledge increased, and the fountains were opened up, and he began to enquire into the matter for himself. The pundits were made to quote chapter and verse for their opinions, and it was found that their premises did not warrant their conclusions. Or their opinions upon one point were compared with their opinions upon an analogous point, and found not to harmonise, and logic demanded that they should be brought into conformity with each other. Sometimes the variance between the futwahs and the texts was so great that it was ascribed to ignorance or corruption. The fact really was that the law had outgrown the authorities. Native Judges would have recognized the fact. English Judges were unable to do so, or else remarked (to use a phrase which I have often heard from the Bench), "that they were bound to maintain the integrity of the law." This was a matter of less importance in Bengal, where Jîmûta Vâhana had already burst the fetters. But in Southern India it came to be accepted, that Mitâksharâ was the last word that could be listened to on Hindu law. The consequence was a state of arrested progress, in which no voices were heard unless they came from the tomb. It was as if a German were to administer English law from the resources of a library furnished with

Fleta, Glanville and Bracton, and terminating with Lord Coke (q).

Force of usage.

§ 39. In Western and Northern India the differences between the written and the unwritten law were too palpable to be passed over. Accordingly in many important cases in Borrodaile's Reports, we find that the Court did not merely ask the opinion of their pundits, but took the evidence of the heads of the castes concerned as to their actual usage. The collection of laws and customs of the Hindu castes, made by Mr. Steele under the orders of Government, was another step in the same direction. It is probable that the laxity, which has been remarked as the characteristic of Hindu law in the Bombay Presidency, would be found equally to exist in many other districts, if the Courts had taken the trouble to look for it. In quite recent times the Courts of the N. W. Provinces and of the Punjâb have acted on the same principle of taking nothing for granted. The result has been the discovery, that while the actual usages existing in those districts are remarkably similar to those which are declared in the Mitāksharâ and the kindred works, there is a complete absence of those religious principles which are so prominent in Brâhmanical law. Consequently the usages themselves have diverged, exactly at the points where they might have been expected to do so (r). *Absente causâ, abest et lex.*

(q) The substance of this paragraph was written by me in an Indian journal so long ago as 1863. I mention the fact, lest it should be supposed that I have borrowed, without acknowledgment, from a very interesting passage in Sir H. S. Maine's *Village Communities*, p. 44.

(r) See *Punjâb Customs*, 5, 11, 78; *Sheo Singh Rai v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. H. C. 382. *Affd. L. R.*, 5 I. A. 87; *Chotay Lall v. Chunno Lall*, L. R., 6 I. A. 15.

CHAPTER III.

THE SOURCES OF HINDU LAW.

Custom.

§ 40. IF I am right in supposing that the great body of existing law consists of ancient usages, more or less modified by Āryan or Brāhmanical influence, it would follow, that the mere fact that a custom was not in accordance with written law, that is with the Brāhmanical code, would be no reason whatever why it should not be binding upon those by whom it was shown to be observed. This is admitted in the strongest terms by the Brāhmanical writers themselves. Manu says that “immemorial usage is transcendant law,” and that “holy sages, well knowing that law is grounded on immemorial custom, embraced, as the root of all piety, good usages long established” (a). And he lays it down that “a king who knows the revealed law, must enquire into the particular laws of classes, the laws or usages of districts, the customs of traders, and the rules of certain families, and establish their peculiar laws” (b). To this Kullûka Bhaṭṭa adds as his gloss, “If they (that is, the laws) be not repugnant to the law of God,” by which no doubt he means the text of the Vedas as interpreted by the Brāhmins. But that Manu contemplated no such restriction is evident, by what follows a little after the above passage. “What has been practised by good men and by virtuous Brāhmins, if it be not inconsistent with the legal customs of provinces or districts, of classes or families, let him establish” (c). So Yājñavalkya says (d), “Of a newly-subjugated territory, the monarch shall preserve the social and religious usages, also Custom binding.

(a) Manu, i. § 108, 110.

(b) Manu, viii. § 41. See, too, Vrihaspati, cited Vyavahāra Mayūkha, i. 1, § 13, and Vāsishta and other authorities, cited M. Müller, A. S. Lit. 50.

(c) Manu, viii. § 46.

(d) Yājñavalkya, i. § 342.

the judicial system, and the state of classes, as they already obtained." And the Mitāksharâ quotes texts to the effect, that even practices expressly inculcated by the sacred ordinances may become obsolete, and should be abandoned if opposed to public opinion (e).

Recognized by
modern law.

§ 41. The fullest effect is given to custom both by our Courts and by legislation. The Judicial Committee in the Ramnaad case said, "Under the Hindu system of law, clear proof of usage will outweigh the written text of the law" (f). And all the recent Acts which provide for the administration of the law dictate a similar deference to usage, unless it is contrary to justice, equity or good conscience, or has been actually declared to be void (g).

Records of local
customs.

§ 42. It is much to be regretted that so little has been done in the way of collecting authentic records of local customs. The belief that Brâhmanism was the law of India was so much fostered by the pundits and judges, that it came to be admitted conventionally, even by those who knew better. The revenue authorities, who were in daily intercourse with the people, were aware that many rules which were held sacred in the court, had never been heard of in the cottage. But their local knowledge appears rarely to have been made accessible to, or valued by the judicial department. I have already mentioned as an exception Mr. Steel's collection of customs in force in the Deccan. In the Punjâb and in Oudh most valuable records of village and tribal customs, relating to the succession to, and disposition of land, have been collected under the authority of the settlement officers, and these have been brought into relation with the judicial system by an enactment, that the entries contained in them should be presumed to be true (h). Many most interesting peculiarities of Punjâb law will be found in a book to which I shall frequently refer

(e) Mitāksharâ, i. 3, § 4.

(f) 12 M. I. A. 436.

(g) See, as to Bombay, Bomb. Reg. IV. of 1827, s. 26; Act II. of 1864, s. 15. As to Burmah, Act XVII. of 1875, s. 5. Central Provinces, Act XX. of 1875, s. 5. Madras, Act III. of 1873, s. 16. Oudh, Act XVIII. of 1876, s. 3. Punjâb, Act XII. of 1878, s. 1. See *Sundar v. Khuman Singh*, 1 All. 613.

(h) These records are known by the terms, Wājib-ul-arz (a written representation or petition) and Riwaz-i-ām (common practice or custom). See *Punjâb Customs*, 19; Act XXXIII. of 1871, s. 61.

which gives the substance of these customs, and of the decisions of the Chief Court of Lahore upon them (*i*). The special interest of these customs arises from the fact, already noticed (*k*), that Brāhmanism seems never to have succeeded in the Punjāb. Accordingly, when we find a particular usage common to the Punjāb and to Sanskrit law, we may infer that there is nothing necessarily Brāhmanical in its origin. Another work of the greatest interest, which I believe no writer has ever noticed, is the Thesawaleme, or description of the customs of the Tamil inhabitants of Jaffna, on the island of Ceylon. The collection was made in 1707, under the orders of the Dutch Government, and was then submitted to, and approved by twelve Moodeliars, or leading Natives, and finally promulgated as an authoritative exposition of their usages (*l*). Now we know that from the earliest times there has been a constant stream of emigration of Tamulians into Ceylon, formerly for conquest, and latterly for purposes of commerce. We also know that the influence of Brahmins, or even of Āryans, among the Drāvidian races of the South has been of the very slightest, at all events until the English officials introduced their Brāhman advisers (*m*). The customs recorded in the Thesawaleme may therefore be taken as very strong evidence of the usages of the Tamil inhabitants of the South of India two or three centuries ago, at a time when it is certain that those usages could not be traced to the Sanskrit writers. Many very interesting customs still existing in Southern India will be found in the Madura Manual by Mr. Nelson, and in the Madras Census Report of 1871 by Dr. Cornish. These show what rich materials are available, if they were only sought for.

Thesawaleme.

§ 43. Questions of usage arise in four different ways in India. First, as regards races to whom the so-called Hindu law has never been applied; for instance, the aboriginal Hill tribes, and those who follow the *Marumakatayem* law of

Various applications of customary law.

(*i*) Notes on Customary Law, as administered in the Courts of the Punjāb, by Charles Boulnois, Esq., Judge of the Chief Court, and W. H. Rattigan, Esq., Lahore, 1876. I cite it shortly as Punjāb Customs.

(*k*) *Ante*, § 8.

(*l*) The edition which I possess was published in 1862, with the decisions of the English Courts, by Mr. H. F. Mutukisna, who gave it to me.

(*m*) See *ante*, § 6.

Malabar, or the *Alya Santana* law of Canara. Secondly, as regards those who profess to follow the Hindu law generally, but who do not admit its theological developments. Thirdly, as regards races who profess submission to it as a whole; and, fourthly, as regards persons formerly bound by Hindu law, but to whom it has become inapplicable.

Cases where religious principles are ignored.

§ 44. The first of the above cases, of course, does not come within the scope of this work at all. The distinction between the second and third classes is most important, as the deceptive similarity between the two is likely to lead to erroneous conclusions in cases where they really differ. For instance, in an old case in Calcutta, where a question of heirship to a Sikh was concerned, this question again turning upon the validity of a Sikh marriage, the Court laid it down generally that "the Sikhs, being a sect of Hindus, must be governed by Hindu law" (*n*). Numerous cases in the Punjâb show that the law of the Sikhs differs materially from the Hindu law, in the very points, such as adoption and the like, in which the difference of religion might be expected to cause a difference of usage. Similar differences are found among the Jâts (*o*), and even among the orthodox Hindus of the extreme north-west of India (*p*). So as regards the Jains, it is now well recognized that though of Hindu origin, and generally adhering to Hindu law, they recognize no divine authority in the Vedas, and do not practise the *Çrâddha*, or ceremony for the dead, which is the religious element in the Sanskrit law. Consequently that the principles which arise out of this element do not bind them, and that their usages in many respects are in consequence completely different (*q*). I strongly suspect that most of the Drâviḍian tribes of Southern India come under the same head (*r*).

(*n*) *Juggomohun Mullick v. Saumcoomar*, 2 M. Dig. 43.

(*o*) The Jâts (Sanskrit, Yâdava) are the descendants of an aboriginal race. Manning's *Ancient India*, i. 66.

(*p*) See Punjâb Customs, *passim*. As to the effect of the introduction of the Punjâb code as creating a *lex loci*, see *Mulkah Do Alum v. Mirza Jehan Kudr*, 10 M. I. A. 252.

(*q*) *Bhagvândâs v. Râjmal*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 241; *Sheo Singh Rai v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. 382, 5 I. A. 87. See a case where such difference of usage was held not to be made out, *Lalla Mahabeer v. Mt. Kundun Kowar*, 8 W. R. 116; L. R., 1 I. A. 55.

(*r*) See *ante*, § 2, 11.

§ 45. As regards those who profess submission to the Hindu law as a whole, questions of usage arise, first, with a view to determine the particular principles of that law by which they should be governed ; and, secondly, to determine the validity of any local, tribal, or family exceptions to that law. *Primâ facie*, any Hindu residing in a particular province of India is held to be subject to the particular doctrines of Hindu law recognized in that province. He would be governed by the Dâya Bhâga in Bengal, by the Vivâda Chintâmaṇi in North Behar and Tirhut, by the Mayûkha in Guzerat, and generally by the Mitâksharâ elsewhere (*s*). But this law is not merely a local law. It becomes the personal law, and a part of the *status* of every family which is governed by it. Consequently where any such family migrates to another province, governed by another law, it carries its own law with it. For instance, a family migrating from a part of India where the Mitâksharâ or the Mithila system prevailed, to Bengal, would not come under the Bengal law from the mere fact of their having taken Bengal as their domicil. And this rule would apply as much to matters of succession to land as to their purely personal relations. In this respect it seems an exception to the usual principles, that the *lex loci* governs matters relating to land, and that the law of the domicil governs personal relations. The reason is, that in India there is no *lex loci*, every person being governed by the law of his personal status. The same rule as above would apply to any family which, by legal usage, had acquired any special custom of succession or the like, peculiar to itself, though differing from that either of its original or acquired domicil (*t*).

Disputed applicability of local law.

§ 46. When such an original variance of law is once established, the presumption arises that it continues ; and the *onus* of making out their contention lies upon those who assert that it has ceased by conformity to the law of the new domicil (*u*). But this presumption may be rebutted, by showing that the

Change of personal law.

(*s*) See *ante*, § 26—31. As to Assam and Orissa, which are supposed to be governed by Bengal law, and Ganjam by the law of Madras, see *ante*, § 11.

(*t*) *Rutcheputty Dutt Iha v. Rajunder Narain Rae*, 2 M. I. A. 132 ; *Byjnath Pershad v. Kopilmon Singh*, 24 W. R. 95, and *per curiam*, 12 M. I. A. 91.

(*u*) *Soorendronath Roy v. Mt. Heeramonee Burmoneah*, 12 M. I. A. 81 ; *Obunnesurree v. Kishen Chunder*, 4 Wym. 226 ; *Pirthee Singh v. Mt. Sheo*, 8 W. R. 261.

family has conformed in its religious or social usages to the locality in which it has settled; or that, while retaining its religious rites, it has acquiesced in a course of devolution of property, according to the common course of descent of property in that district, among persons of the same class (*x*).

Act of government.

Of course the mere fact that, by the act of Government, a district which is governed by one system of law is annexed to one which is governed by a different system, cannot raise any presumption that the inhabitants of either district have adopted the usages of the other (*y*).

Evidence of valid custom.

§ 47. The next question is as to the validity of customs differing from the general Hindu law, when practised by persons who admit that they are subject to that law. According to the view of customary law taken by Mr. Austin (*z*), a custom can never be considered binding until it has become a law by some act, legislative or judicial, of the sovereign power. Language pointing to the same view is to be found in one judgment of the Madras High Court (*a*). But such a view cannot now be sustained. It is open to the obvious objection that, in the absence of legislation, no custom could ever be judicially recognized for the first time. A decision in its favour would assume that it was already binding. The sounder view appears to be, that law and usage act and re-act upon each other. A belief in the propriety or imperative nature of a particular course of conduct, produces a uniformity of behaviour in following it; and a uniformity of behaviour in following a particular course of conduct, produces a belief that it is imperative or proper to do so. When from either cause, or from both causes, a uniform and persistent usage has moulded the life, and regulated the dealings, of a particular class of the community, it becomes a custom, which is a part of their personal law. Such a custom deserves to be recognized and enforced by the Courts, unless it is injurious to the public interests, or is in conflict with any express law of the ruling power (*b*). Hence, where a special

(*x*) *Rajchunder v. Gokulchund*, 1 S. D. 43 (56); *Chundoo Sheekhur v. Nobin Soondur*, 2 W. R. 197; *Rambrohmoo v. Kaminee*, 3 Wym. 3; *Junarudddeen v. Nobin Chunder*, Marsh. 232; *per curiam*, 12 M. I. A. 96.

(*y*) *Prithee Singh v. Court of Wards*, 23 W. R. 272.

(*z*) Austin, i. 148, ii. 229.

(*a*) 1 Mad. H. C. 424.

(*b*) See the subject discussed, *Khojah's case*, Perry, O. C. 110; *Howard v.*

usage of succession was set up, the High Court of Madras said, "What the law requires before an alleged custom can receive the recognition of the Court, and so acquire legal force, is satisfactory proof of usage, so long and invariably acted upon in practice, as to show that it has, by common consent, been submitted to as the established governing rule of the particular family, class or district of country; and the course of practice upon which the custom rests must not be left in doubt, but be proved with certainty" (c). This decision was affirmed on appeal, and the Judicial Committee observed (d): "Their Lordships are fully sensible of the importance and justice of giving effect to long established usages existing in particular districts and families in India, but it is of the essence of special usages, modifying the ordinary law of succession, that they should be ancient and invariable; and it is further essential that they should be established to be so by clear and unambiguous evidence. It is only by means of such evidence that the Courts can be assured of their existence, and that they possess the conditions of antiquity and certainty on which alone their legal title to recognition depends." Accordingly the Madras High Court, when directing an inquiry as to an alleged custom in the south of India that Brāhmans should adopt their sisters' sons, laid it down that: I. The evidence should be such as to prove the uniformity and continuity of the usage, and the conviction of those following it that they were acting in accordance with law, and this conviction must be inferred from the evidence; II. Evidence of acts of the kind, acquiescence in those acts, decisions of Courts or even of punchayets upholding such acts, the statements of experienced and competent persons of their belief that such acts were legal and valid, will all be admissible; but it is obvious that although admissible, evidence of this latter kind will be of little weight if unsupported by actual examples of the usage asserted" (e). Finally, the custom set

Pestonji, ib. 535; *Tara Chand v. Reeb Ram*, 3 Mad. H. C. 56; *Bhau Nanaji v. Sundhabai*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 249; *Savigny*, *Droit Rom.* i. 33—36, 165—175; *Introduction to Punjab Customs*.

(c) *Sivananjanja Perumál v. Muttu Rámalinga*, 3 Mad. H. C. 75, 77; affirmed on appeal, 14 M. I. A., 570; 12 B. L. R., (P. C.), 396. Approved by the Bombay High Court, 10 Bomb. H. C. 234. See also 5 Bomb. H. C., (A. C. J.), 161.

(d) 14 M. I. A. 585.

(e) *Gopaláyan v. Raghupatiáyan*, 7 Mad. H. C. 250, 254. See, too, *per Markby*, J., 9 B. L. R. 294; 12 M. I. A., 436 and L. R., 3 I. A., 285.

up must be definite, so that its application in any given instance may be clear and certain, and reasonable. (*f*)

Custom cannot
be created by
agreement.

§ 48. It follows from the very nature of the case, that a mere agreement among certain persons to adopt a particular rule, cannot create a new custom binding on others, whatever its effect may be upon themselves (*g*). Nor can a family custom ever be binding where the family or estate to which it attaches is so modern as to preclude the very idea of immemorial usage (*h*). Nor does a custom, such as that of primogeniture, which has governed the devolution of an estate in the hands of a particular family, follow it into the hands of another family, by whom it may have been purchased. In other words, it does not run with the land (*i*).

Continuity
essential.

§ 49. Continuity is as essential to the validity of a custom as antiquity. In the case of a widely-spread local custom, want of continuity would be evidence that it had never had a legal existence; but it is difficult to imagine that such a custom, once thoroughly established, should come to a sudden end. It is different, however, in the case of family usage, which is founded on the consent of a smaller number of persons. Therefore, where it appeared that the members of a family, interested in an estate in the nature of a Râj, had for twenty years dealt with it as joint family property, as if the ordinary laws of succession governed the descent, the Privy Council held that any impartible character which it had originally possessed, was determined. They said: "Their Lordships cannot find any principle or authority for holding that in point of law a manner of descent of an ordinary estate, depending solely on family usage, may not be discontinued, so as to let in the ordinary law of succession. Such family usages are in their nature different from a territorial custom, which is the *lex loci* binding all persons within the local limits in which it prevails. It is of the essence of family usages that they should be certain, invariable, and continuous; and well established discontinuance must be held to destroy them.

May be
discontinued.

(*f*) *Lachman Rai v. Akbar Khan*, 1 All. 440; *Lala v. Hira Sing*, 2 All. 49.

(*g*) *Per cur.* 8 M. I. A. 420, 9 M. I. A. 242; *Mt. Sarupi v. Mukh Ram*, 2 N. W. P. H. C. 227.

(*h*) *Umritnath Chowdhry v. Goureenath*, 13 M. I. A. 542, 549.

(*i*) *Gopal Dass v. Nurotum Singh*, 7 S. D. 195 (230).

'This would be so when the discontinuance has arisen from accidental causes ; and the effect cannot be less, when it has been intentionally brought about by the concurrent will of the family. It would lead to much confusion, and abundant litigation, if the law attempted to revive and give effect to usages of this kind after they had been clearly abandoned, and the abandonment had been, as in this case, long acted upon" (j).

§ 50. The above cases settle a question, as to which there was at first some doubt entertained, viz., whether a particular family could have a usage differing from the law of the surrounding district applicable to similar persons (k). There is nothing to prevent proof of such a family usage. But in the case of a single family, and especially a family of no great importance, there will of course be very great difficulty in proving that the usage possesses the antiquity and continuousness, and arises from the sense of legal necessity as distinguished from conventional arrangement, that is required to make out a binding usage (l). Where the family is a very great one, whose records are capable of being verified for a number of generations, the difficulty disappears. In the case of the Tipperah Râj a usage by which the Râja nominates from amongst the members of his family the Jobrâj (young sovereign) and the Baṛa Thakoor (chief lord), of whom the former succeeds to the Râj on a demise of the Râja, and the second takes the place of Jobrâj, has been repeatedly established (m). Also a custom in the Râj of Tirhoot, by which the Râja in possession abdicates during his lifetime, and assigns the Râj to his eldest son, or nearest male heir (n). Many of the cases of estates descending by primogeniture appear to rest on the nature of the estate itself, as being a sort of sovereignty, which from its constitution is impartible (o). But family custom alone will be

Usage of single family.

(j) *Rajkishen Singh v. Ramjoy Surma*, 1 Cal. 186. See, also, *per cur.* 9 M. I. A. 243.

(k) See *Basvantrav v. Mantappa*, 1 Bomb. H. C. Appx. 42 (2nd ed.) ; *per cur.* 3 Mad. H. C. 58 ; *Madhavray v. Balkrishna*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 113.

(l) See the subject discussed, 11 Bomb. H. C. 269.

(m) *Neelkisto Deb v. Beerchunder*, 12 M. I. A. 523.

(n) *Gunes v. Moheshur Singh*, 6 M. I. A. 164 ; see 7 S. D. 228 (271) ; see the *Pachete Râj*, *Gurunarain Deo v. Unund Lall*, 6 S. D. 282 (354), *affd.*, 5 M. I. A. 82.

(o) There may, however, be a partible Râj. See *Ghirdharee v. Koolahal Singh*, 2 M. I. A. 344.

sufficient, even if the estate is not of the nature of a Râj, provided it is made out (*p*). And where an impartible Râj has been confiscated by government, and then granted out again, either to a stranger, or to a member of the same family, the presumption is that it has been granted with its incidents as a Râj, of which the most prominent are impartibility and descent by primogeniture (*q*).

Immoral usages.

§ 51. Customs which are immoral or contrary to public policy will neither be enforced nor sanctioned (*r*). For instance, prostitution is not only recognized by Indian usage, and honoured in the class of dancing girls, but the relations between the prostitute and her paramour were regulated by law, just as any other species of contract (*s*). Even under English law prostitution is, of course, not illegal, in the sense of being either prohibited or punishable; and I conceive there can be no reason why the existence of a distinct class of prostitutes in India, with special rules of descent *inter se*, should not be recognized now, and those rules acted on (*t*). But prostitution even according to Hindu views is immoral, and entails degradation from caste (*u*). It is quite clear therefore that no English Court would look upon prostitution as a consideration that would support a contract; and it has been held that the English rule will also be enforced to the extent of defeating an action against a prostitute for lodgings or the like, supplied to her for the express purpose of enabling her to carry on her trade (*x*). So it has been held that the procuring of a minor to be a dancing girl at a pagoda, or the disposing of her as such, is punishable under ss. 372 & 373 of the Indian Penal Code (*y*).

(*p*) *Rawut Urjun Singh v. Rawut Ghunsiam*, 5 M. I. A. 169; *Chowdhry Chintamun Singh v. Mt. Nowlukho*, 2 I. A. 263.

(*q*) *Beer Pertab v. Maharajah Rajender*, 12 M. I. A. 1.

(*r*) Manu, viii. § 41; M. Müller, A. S. L. 50. See statutes cited, *ante*, § 41, n. g.

(*s*) See Viv. Chint. 101.

(*t*) *Tara Munanee v. Motee Buneanee*, 7 S. D. 273 (325); *Shida v. Sunshidapa*, Morris, Pt. I. 137; *Kamakshi v. Nagarathnum*, 5 Mad. H. C. 161; and see *per cur.*, 2 Mad. H. C. 78. See *post*, § 180.

(*u*) 2 W. MacN. 132.

(*x*) *Goureenath v. Modhomonee*, 18 W. R. 445. See *Sutao v. Hurreeram*, Bellasis, 1.

(*y*) *Ex p. Padmarati*, 5 Mad. H. C. 415; *Reg. v. Jaili Bhavin*, 6 Bomb. H. C. C. C. 60; *Chinna Ummayi v. Tegarai*, 1 Mad. L. R. 168.

So it has been held in Bombay that caste customs authorising a woman to abandon her husband, and marry again without his consent, were void for immorality (z). And it was doubted whether a custom authorising her to marry again, during the lifetime of her husband, and with his consent, would have been valid (a). Among the Nairs, as is well known, the marriage relation involves no obligation to chastity on the part of the woman, and gives no rights to the man. But here what the law recognizes is not a custom to break the marriage bond, but the fact that there is no marriage bond at all. In a very recent case before the Privy Council, a custom was set up as existing on the west coast of India, whereby the trustees of a religious institution were allowed to sell their trust. The Judicial Committee found that no such custom was made out, but intimated that in any case they would have held it to be invalid, as being opposed to public policy (b).

§ 52. The fourth class of cases mentioned before (§ 43), arises when circumstances occur which make the law, which has previously governed a family, no longer applicable. In one sense any new law which is adopted for the governance of such a family must be wanting, as regards that family, in the element of antiquity necessary to constitute a custom. On the other hand the law itself which is adopted may be of immemorial character; the only question would be as to the power of the family to adopt it. We have already seen that a family migrating from one part of India to another, may either retain the law of its origin or adopt that of its domicile (c). The same rule applies to a family which has changed its *status*. If the new *status* carries with it an obligation to submit to a particular form of law, such form of law is binding upon it. If however it carries with it no such obligation, then the family is at liberty either to retain so much of its old law as is consistent with its change of

Change of family usage.

(z) *Reg. v. Karsan Goja*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 124; see 5 Bomb. H. C. C. C. 18; *Uji v. Hathi Lalu*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 133; *Narayan v. Laving*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 140.

(a) *Khenkor v. Umiashunker*, 10 Bomb. A. C. 381.

(b) *Rajah Vurmah v. Ravi Vurmah*, 4 I. A. 76.

(c) *Ante*, § 46.

Conversion to
Muhammedan-
ism.

status, or to adopt the usages of any other class with which the new *status* allows it to associate itself.

§ 53. Where a Hindu has become converted to Muhammedanism, he accepts a new mode of life, which is governed by a law recognized and enforced in India. It has been stated that the property which he was possessed of at the time of his conversion, will devolve upon those who were entitled to it at that time, by the Hindu law, but that the property which he may subsequently acquire will devolve according to Muhammedan law (*d*). The former proposition, however, must, I should think, be limited to cases where by the Hindu law his heirs had acquired an interest which he could not defeat. If he was able to disinherit any of his relations by alienation or will, it is difficult to see why he should not disinherit them by adopting a law which gave him a different line of heirs. The latter part of the proposition, however, has been very recently affirmed by the Privy Council, in a case where it was contended that a family which had been converted several generations back to Muhammedanism was still governed by Hindu law. Their Lordships said, "This case is distinguishable from that of *Abraham v. Abraham* (*e*). There the parties were native Christians, not having, as such, any law of inheritance defined by statute; and, in the absence of one, this Committee applied the law by which, as the evidence proved, the particular family intended to be governed. But the written law of India has prescribed broadly that in questions of succession and inheritance, the Hindu law is to be applied to Hindus, and the Muhammedan law to Muhammedans; and in the judgment delivered by Lord Kingsdown in *Abraham v. Abraham*, p. 239, it is said that 'this rule must be understood to refer to Hindus and Muhammedans, not by birth merely, but by religion also.' The two cases in W. H. MacNaghten's *Principles of Hind. L.*, vol. ii., pp. 131, 132, which deal with the case of converts from the Hindu to the Muhammedan faith, and rule that the heirs according to Hindu law will take all the property which the deceased had at the time of his conversion, are also authorities

(*d*) 2 W. MacN. 131, 132; 10 M. I. A. 537.

(*e*) 9 M. I. A. 195.

for the proposition that this subsequently acquired property is to be governed by the Muhammedan law. Here there is nothing to show conclusively when or how the property was acquired by "the great ancestor;" there was no conflict as in the cases just referred to, between Hindus and Muhammedans touching the succession to him. Whatever he had is admitted to have passed to his descendants, of whom all, like himself, were Muhammedans; and it seems to be contrary to principle that, as between them, the succession should be governed by any but Muhammedan law. Whether it is competent for a family converted from the Hindu to the Muhammedan faith to retain for several generations Hindu usages and customs, and by virtue of that retention to set up for itself a special and customary law of inheritance, is a question which, so far as their Lordships are aware, has never been decided. It is not absolutely necessary for the determination of this appeal to decide that question in the negative, and their Lordships abstain from doing so. They must, however, observe, that to control the general law, if indeed the Muhammedan law admits of such control, much stronger proof of special usage would be required than has been given in this case" (f).

§ 54. These remarks of the Judicial Committee were not necessary for the decision of the case before them, as they held that the plaintiff would equally have failed if the principles of Hindu law had been applied to his claim. Nor did they profess absolutely to decide that a convert to Muhammedanism might not still retain Hindu usages, and they partly rest their view against such retention of usage, upon the ground that there was no decision upon the subject. The point, however, has been repeatedly decided the other way in Bombay, with regard to a sect called *Khojahs*. These are a class of persons who were originally Hindus, but who became converts to Muhammedanism about four hundred years ago, retaining however many Hindu usages, amongst others an order of succession opposed to that prescribed by the Koran. A similar sect named the *Memon Cutchees* had a similar history and usage. In 1847 the question was raised in the Supreme Court

Retention of
Hindu usages.

(f) *Jowala Buksh v. Dharum Singh*, 10 M. I. A. 511, 537.

of Bombay, whether this order of succession could be supported, and Sir Erskine Perry, in an elaborate judgment, decided that it could. His decision has been followed in numerous cases in Bombay, both in the Supreme and High Court, and may be considered as thoroughly established (g). But although these cases may probably be taken as settling that an adherence to the religion of the Koran does not necessarily entail an adherence to its civil law, there may be cases in which religion and law are inseparable. In such a case the ruling of the Privy Council would be strictly in point, and would debar any one who had accepted the religion from relying on a custom opposed to the law. For instance, monogamy is an essential part of the law of Christianity. A Muhammedan or Hindu convert to Christianity could not possibly marry a second wife after his conversion, during the life of his first, and if he did so the issue by such second marriage would certainly not be legitimate, any Hindu or Muhammedan usage to the contrary notwithstanding (h). His conversion would not invalidate marriages celebrated, or affect the legitimacy of issue born before that event. What its effect might be upon issue proceeding from a plurality of wives retained after he became a Christian, would be a very interesting question, which has never arisen.

Case of the
Abrahams.

§ 55. The second part of the rule above stated (i) is illustrated by the case of *Abraham v. Abraham* (k), referred to above. There it appeared that there were different classes of native Christians of Hindu origin. Some retained Hindu manners and usages, wholly or chiefly, while others, who were known as East Indians, and who are generally of mixed blood, conformed in all respects to European customs. The founder of the family in question was of pure Hindu blood, and belonged to a class of native Christians which retained native customs. But as he rose in the world and

(g) *Khojah's case*, Perry, O. C. 110; *Gungbai v. Thavur Moollah*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 71, 73; *Goods of Mulbai*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 292; *Goods of Rahimbai*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 294; *Rahimatbai v. Hirbai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 34; *Suddurtonnessa v. Majada*, 3 Calc. 694.

(h) See *Hyde v. Hyde*, L. R. 1 P. & D. 130; *Skinner v. Orde*, 14 M. I. A. 309, 321.

(i) *Ante*, § 52.

(k) 9 M. I. A. 195.

accumulated property, he assumed the dress and usages of Europeans. He married an East Indian wife, and was admitted into, and recognized as a member of the East Indian community. After his death the question arose whether his property was to be treated as the joint property of an undivided Hindu family, and governed by pure Hindu law ; or if not, whether it was to be governed by a law of usage, similar to Hindu or to European law. The former proposition was at once rejected. Their Lordships said (l) : “ It is a question of parcenership and not of heirship. Heirship may be governed by the Hindu law, or by any other law to which the ancestorship may be subject ; but parcenership, understood in the sense in which their Lordships here use the term, as expressing the rights and obligations growing out of the *status* of an undivided family, is the creature of, and must be governed by the Hindu law. Considering the case, then, with reference to parcenership, what is the position of a member of a Hindu family who has become a convert to Christianity ? He becomes, as their Lordships apprehend, at once severed from the family and regarded by them as an outcast. The tie which bound the family together is, so far as he is concerned, not only loosened but dissolved. The obligations consequent upon, and connected with the tie must, as it seems to their Lordships, be dissolved with it. Parcenership may be put an end to by a severance effected by partition ; it must, as their Lordships think, equally be put an end to by severance which the Hindu law recognizes and creates. Their Lordships, therefore, are of opinion that, upon the conversion of a Hindu to Christianity, the Hindu law ceases to have any continuing obligatory force upon the convert. He may renounce the old law by which he was bound, as he has renounced his old religion ; or, if he thinks fit, he may abide by the old law, notwithstanding he has renounced the old religion.” Their Lordships then reviewed the facts, showing the different usages of different classes of Christians, and the evidence that Abraham had, in fact, passed from one class into another,

(l) 9 M. I. A. 237.

and proceeded to say (m): "That it is not competent to parties to create, as to property, any new law to regulate the succession to it *ab intestato*, their Lordships entertain no doubt; but that is not the question on which this case depends. The question is, whether, when there are different laws as to property applying to different classes, parties ought not to be considered to have adopted the law as to property, whether in respect of succession *ab intestato* or in other respects, of the class to which they belong. In this particular case the question is, whether the property was bound by the Hindu law of parcenership." "The law has not, so far as their Lordships can see, prohibited a Christian convert from changing his class. The inconvenience resulting from a change of succession consequent on a change of class is no greater than that which often results from a change of domicil. The *argumentum ab inconvenienti* cannot therefore be used against the legality of such a change. If such change takes place in fact, why should it be regarded as non-existing in law? Their Lordships are of opinion, that it was competent for Matthew Abraham, though himself both by origin and actually in his youth a 'native Christian,' following the Hindu laws and customs on matters relating to property, to change his class of Christians, and become of the Christian class to which his wife belonged. His family was managed and lived in all respects like an East Indian family. In such a family the undivided family union, in the sense before mentioned, is unknown."

Illegitimate issue of European.

§ 56. On the same principle, where a European had illegitimate sons by two Hindu women, and they conformed in all respects to Hindu habits and usages, it was held that they must for all purposes be treated as Hindus, and governed by Hindu law as such. "They were not an united Hindu family in the ordinary sense in which that term is used by the text writers on Hindu law; a family of which the father was in his lifetime the head, and the sons in a sense parceners in birth, by an inchoate though alterable title; but they were sons of a Christian father by different Hindu

(m) 9 M. I. A. 242, 244.

mothers, constituting themselves parceners in the enjoyment of their property, after the manner of a Hindu joint family'' (n). And it was held that their rights of succession *inter se* and to their mother, must be judged by Hindu law, which recognized such rights, and not by English law, which denied them (o). On the other hand, the vast majority of the class known as East Indians, and referred to in the judgment in *Abraham v. Abraham*, have been the illegitimate sons of Europeans by natives or half-caste women, who, from being acknowledged and cared for by their fathers, have adopted European modes of life. These, as already stated, would be governed by European law.

(n) *Myna Boyee v. Ootaram*, 8 M. I. A. 400, 420.

(o) Same case, 2 Mad. H. C. 196.

CHAPTER IV.

FAMILY RELATIONS.

Marriage and Sonship.

Anomalies in
Family Law.

§ 57. No part of the Hindu Law is more anomalous than that which governs the Family relations. Not only does there appear to be a complete break of continuity between the ancient system and that which now prevails, but the different parts of the ancient system appear in this respect to be in direct conflict with each other. We find a law of inheritance, which assumes the possibility of tracing male ancestors in an unbroken pedigree extending to fourteen generations; while, coupled with it, is a family law, in which several admitted forms of marriage are only euphemisms for seduction and rape, and in which twelve sorts of sons are recognized, the majority of whom have no blood relationship to their own father. I am not aware that any attempt has hitherto been made to harmonise or account for these apparent inconsistencies. It has been suggested, however, that some of the peculiarities of the system may be referred to the practice of polyandry, which is supposed to have been once universal (*a*). It seems to me that the proved existence of such a practice would not account for the facts. I also doubt whether polyandry, properly so called (*b*), ever prevailed

(*a*) I refer, of course, to the views put forward by Mr. McLennan throughout his *Studies in Ancient History*, 1876. Also in two articles in the *Fortnightly Review*, May and June, 1877. See these views discussed by Mr. Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, § 278-303; *Fortnightly Review*, June, 1877; and by Mr. Lewis H. Morgan in his *Ancient Society*.

(*b*) By polyandry, properly so called, I mean a system under which a woman is the legal property of several husbands at once, as among the Todas; or under which a woman, who is legally married to one husband, has the right, which he cannot dispute, to admit other men at her own pleasure, as among the Nairs. I exclude cases of mere dissoluteness. No one would apply the term polyandry to the institution of the *cavalier servente* in Italy or Spain. I also exclude cases in which a woman is allowed to offer herself to a man, who claims

among the races who were governed by the system now under discussion, while they were governed by it. It is quite possible that it may have prevailed among them at a still earlier stage of their history. But this circumstance would be immaterial, if there is reason to suppose that they had escaped from its influence before the introduction of the Family law, which we find in force at the time of the earliest Sanskrit writings. Still more, if that law can be accounted for on principles which have nothing to do with polyandry. It will be well, however, to clear the ground for the discussion, by enquiring what are the actual facts.

§ 58. Among the non-Āryan races of India, both the former and the present existence of polyandry is beyond dispute. It is peculiarly common among the Hill tribes, who are probably aboriginal, but it is also widely diffused among the inhabitants of the plains. Among the Nairs, the woman remains in her own home after her marriage, and there associates with as many men as she pleases (*c*). The Teehurs of Oude “live together almost indiscriminately in large communities, and even where two people are regarded as married, the tie is but nominal” (*d*). Among the Western Kallans of Madura, “it constantly happens that a woman is the wife of either ten, eight, six, or two husbands, who are held to be the fathers jointly and severally of any children that may be born of her body. And still more curiously, when the children of such a family grow up, they for some unknown reason style themselves the children, not of ten, eight, or six fathers, as the case may be, but of eight and two, or six and two, or four and two fathers” (*e*). Among the Kannuvans of Madura, “a woman may legally marry any number of men in succession, though she may not have two husbands at one and the same time. She, may, however, bestow favours on paramours without hindrance, provided they be of equal caste with her” (*f*). Among the Todas of the Nilgiris,

Polyandry
among non-
Āryan races.

a sort of semi-divinity, as in the case of the Mahārājas of Bombay; and the analogous cases of promiscuous prostitution of married women as a sort of religious rite. See Dubois (ed. 1862), 302; Wilson, Works, i. 263.

(*c*) McLennan, 147.

(*d*) Lubbock, *Origin of Man* (ed. 1870), 73, citing the *People of India*, by Kaye and Watson, ii. 85.

(*e*) Madura Manual, Pt. II. 54.

(*f*) Ibid. 34.

as in Thibet, the wife is the property of all the brothers, and lives in their home (*g*). A similar custom prevails among the Tiyars, or palm cultivators of Malabar and Travancore (*h*). Among the Tottiyars, a caste of Madura, it is the usage for brothers, uncles, nephews and other relations to hold their wives in common, and their priests compel them to keep up the custom, if they are unwilling; outside the family they are chaste (*i*).

Polyandry
among Áryans.

§ 59. It is difficult to believe that polyandry in its lowest form, as authorising the union of women with a plurality of husbands of different family, could ever have been common among the Áryan Hindus. Such a system, as Mr. McLennan points out (*k*), would necessarily produce a system of kinship through females, such as actually exists among the polyandrous tribes of the West Coast of India. Now the most striking feature in the Áryan Hindu customs is the strictness with which kinship is traced through males. Except in Bengal, where the change is comparatively modern, agnates to the fourteenth degree exclude cognates. This rule is connected with, if it is not based upon their religious system, the first principle of which was the practice of worshipping deceased male ancestors to the remotest degree (*l*). This, of course, involved the assumption that those ancestors could be identified with the most perfect certainty. The female ancestors were only worshipped in conjunction with their deceased husbands. We can be quite certain that this system was one of enormous antiquity, since we find exactly the same practice of religious offerings to the dead prevailing among the Greeks and Romans. We may assert with confidence that a usage common to the three races had previously existed in that ancient stock from which Hindus, Greeks and Romans alike proceeded. No doubt Mr. McLennan points out numerous indications of kinship through females among the Greeks, especially in the case of the Trial of Orestes. But, if I may be allowed to say so, all

(*g*) Breeks, *Primitive Tribes*, 10.

(*h*) Madras Census Report, 162.

(*i*) Dubois, 3; Madura Manual, Pt. II. 82.

(*k*) *Studies*, 124, 135.

(*l*) Manu, iii. § 81—91, 122—125, 189, 193—231, 282—284; Spencer, i. 304; Appx. I.; M. Müller, A. S. Lit. 386; Ind. Wisd. 255.

these instances seem to be less the voice of a living law, than the feeble echoes of one sounding from a past that was dead (*m*). I by no means deny that polyandry of the second, or Toda type, may have existed among the Hindu Āryans. But I think that at the earliest times of which we have any evidence it had become very rare, and had fallen into complete discredit even where it existed. Also, that everything which we find in the oldest Hindu laws can be accounted for without any reference to it.

§ 60. What then is the actual evidence upon the subject? The earliest indication of polyandry of which I am aware, is to be found in a hymn in the R̥ig-Veda, which is addressed to the two Aṣvins. "Aṣvins, your admirable horses bore the car which you have harnessed first to the goal for the sake of honour; and the damsel who was the prize came through affection to you, and acknowledged your husbandship, saying, you are my lords" (*n*). This evidently points to the practice of *Svayaṃvara*, when a maiden of high rank used to offer herself as the prize to the conqueror in a contest of skill, and in this instance became the wife of several suitors at once. It is exactly in conformity with the well-known case of Draupadī, who, as the Mahābhārata relates, was won at an archery match by the ~~eldest~~ of the five Pāṇḍava princes, and then became the wife of all. As far as I know, this is the only definite instance in which an Āryan woman is recorded to have become the legal permanent wife of several men. Undoubtedly, as Professor Max Müller remarks (*o*), the epic tradition must have been very strong to compel the authors to record a proceeding so violently opposed to Brāhmanical law. Yet the very description of the transaction represents it as one which was opposed to public opinion, and which was rather justified by very remote tradition than by existing practice. I take

Evidences of
polyandry.

Draupadī.
third brother

(*m*) See Teulon, *La Mère*, 7. "Sous les conquérants Āryas et Sémites s'étend souvent l'heureuse expression de M. d'Eckstein, un *humus scientifique*. Sous cette couche d'êtres humains, d'autres races ont vécu, obéissant à des lois qui, si elles n'ont été générales, ont régné du moins sur d'immenses étendues. Leurs civilisations reposaient sur le *droit de la mère*, &c." See also Teulon, 62, 63. "Partout, où les Āryas se sont établis, ils ont introduit avec eux la famille gouvernée par le père."

(*n*) Cited Wheeler, *Hist. of India*, ii. 502.

(*o*) A. S. Lit. 46.

the account of it given by Mr. McLennan (*p*). “The father of Draupadî is represented by the compilers of the epic as shocked at the proposal of the princes to marry his daughter. ‘You who know the law,’ he is made to say, ‘must not commit an unlawful act which is contrary to usage and the Vedas.’ The reply is, ‘The law, O King, is subtle. We do not know its way. We follow the path which has been trodden by our ancestors in succession.’ One of the princes then pleads precedent. ‘In an old tradition it is recorded that Iatila, of the family of Gotama, that most excellent of moral women, dwelt with seven saints; and that Varski, the daughter of a Muni, cohabited with ten brothers, all of them called Prachetas, whose souls had been purified with penance.’” Now upon this statement the alleged ancestral usage appears really to have been non-existent. The only specific instances that could be adduced were certainly not cases of marriage. They were instances of special indulgence allowed to Rishis, who had passed out of the order of married men, and whose greatness of spiritual merit made it impossible for them to commit sin (*q*). It is also to be remembered that the Pâṇḍava princes were Kshatriyas, to whom greater license was allowed in their dealings with the sex, and for whom the loosest forms of marriage were sanctioned (*r*). If polyandrous practices existed among the aborigines whom they conquered, these would naturally be imitated by them. Just as the English knights who settled beyond the Pale became *Hibernis Hiberniores*. On the other hand, in a passage of the Rāmāyaṇa (*s*), where the Rākshasa meets Râma and his brother wandering with Sîtâ, the wife of the former, the giant accosts them in language of much moral indignation, saying, “Oh little dwarfs, why do you come with your wife into the forest of Daṇḍaka, clad in the habit of devotees, and armed with arrows, bow and scimitar? Why do you two devotees remain with one woman? Why are you, oh profligate wretches, corrupting the devout sages?” The giant seems to have looked upon polyandry with the same abhorrence as Draupadî’s father.

Râma and Sîtâ.

(*p*) Fort. Rev., May 1877, 698.

(*q*) See Āpastamba, ii. 13, § 8—10, and *post*, § 61.

(*r*) Manu, iii. § 26.

(*s*) Cited Wheeler, Hist. India, ii. 241.

§ 61. Other passages of the Mahâbhârata are referred to, which seem rather to evidence the greatest want of chastity, and grossness in the relations between the sexes, than anything like polyandry. It is said that "women were formerly unconfined, and roamed about at their pleasure independent. Though in their youthful innocence they abandoned their husbands, they were guilty of no offence; for such was the rule in early times. This ancient custom is even now the law for creatures born as brutes, which are free from lust and anger. This custom is supported by authority, and is observed by great Rishis, and it is still practised among the northern Kurus." Dr. Muir goes on to add, "A stop was, however, put to the practice by Svetaketu, whose indignation was on one occasion aroused by a Brâhman taking his mother by the hand, and inviting her to go away with him, although his father, in whose presence this occurred, informed him that there was no reason for his displeasure, as the custom was one which had prevailed from time immemorial. But Svetaketu could not tolerate the practice; and introduced the existing rule. A wife and a husband indulging in promiscuous intercourse were thenceforward guilty of sin" (t). So the Gândhâra Brâhmans of the Punjâb are said "to corrupt their own sisters and daughters-in-law, and to offer their wives to others, hiring and selling them like commodities for money. Their women, being thus given up to strangers, are consequently shameless;" as might have been expected (u). In exactly the same way the Koravers of Southern India, who are not polyandrous, sell and mortgage their wives and daughters when they are in want of money (x). Of course delicacy or chastity must be utterly unknown in such a state of society. But these very texts seem to show that each wife was appropriated to a single husband, though he was willing to allow her the greatest freedom of action.

Looseness of marriage tie.

§ 62. When we come to the law writers it is quite certain

Early Family Law.

(t) Muir, A. S. T. ii. 418 (2nd ed.). The first passage is cited by Mr. McLennan, p. 173, n., from the 1st ed. ii. 336. See also other passages from the Mahâbhârata, cited 2 Dig. 392—394.

(u) Muir, A. S. T. ii. 482, 483.

(x) Madras Census Report, 167.

that a woman could never have more than one husband at a time. But we also find that sonship and marriage seem to stand in no relation to each other. A man's son need not have been begotten by his father, nor need he have been produced by his father's wife. How is such a state of the family, which appears to set genealogy at defiance, reconcilable with a system of property which is based upon the strictest ascertainment of pedigree? I believe the answer is simply this—that a son was always assigned in law to the male who was the legal owner of the mother. Further that the filial relation was itself capable of being assigned over by the person to whom the son was subject, or by the son himself if emancipated. If I am right in this view, the theory that the *levirate* is invariably a survival of polyandry will fall to the ground.

Principle of
sonship.

Different sorts of
sons.

§ 63. The various sorts of sons recognized by the early writers were the following. The legitimate son (*aurasa*), the son of an appointed daughter (*putrikâ putra*), the son begotten on the wife (*kshetrâja*), the son born secretly (*gûḍhâja*), the damsel's son (*kanîna*), the son taken with the bride (*sahoḍha*), the son of a twice married woman (*paunarbhava*), the son by a Sudra woman (*nishada*), or by a concubine (*pâraçava*), the adopted son (*dattaka*), the son made (*krîtrima*), the son bought (*krîtaka*), the son cast off (*apaviḍḍha*), and the son self-given (*svayaṁdattaka*) (*y*). Of these it will be at once seen that the five last never could be the actual sons of their father, and of the other nine only the first and the last two need be. Of the remaining seven, some necessarily, and others probably, were not begotten by him at all. Further, many of these were not even the offspring of his wife. The problem for solution is, how they came to be considered as his sons? To answer this, we must enquire into the Hindu idea of paternity.

Necessity for
sons.

§ 64. In modern times children are a luxury to the rich, an encumbrance to the poor. In early ages female offspring stood in the same position, but male issue was passionately prized. The

(*y*) Baudhâya xvii. 2, § 10—24; Gautama xxviii. § 29, 30; Vasiṣṭha xvii. § 9—22; Viṣṇu xv. § 1—27; Nârada xiii. § 17—20, 45—47; Manu, ix. § 127—140, 158—184; Devala, 3 Dig. 153; Yâma, *ib.* 154; Yâjñavalkya ii. § 128—132; Mit. i. 11. A'pastamba stands alone among the earlier writers in only recognizing the legitimate son, ii. 13, § 1—11.

The annexed table shows the order in which the different sons are placed by the various authors.

| | Aurasa. Legitimate son. | Kshetrāja. Son begotten on wife. | Putrikā putra. Son of appointed daughter. | Kaṇha. Damself's son. | Gāḍhaja. Secretly born. | Pannarbhava. Son of twice mar- ried woman. | Sahodha. Son of pregnant bride. | Nishada. Son of Sudra woman. | Dattaka. Adopted son. | Kritrima. Son made. | Kritaka. Son bought. | Apaviddha. Son cast off. | Svayādatṭaka. Self-given son. |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 10-23 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 13 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 12 |
| Gautama, xxviii. § 20-30 | 1 | 2 | 10(a) | 7 | 5 | 9 | 8 | — | 3 | 4 | 12 | 6 | 11 |
| Vāsishta, xvii. § 9-21 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 12 | 8 | — | 9 | 11 | 10 |
| Vishnu, xv. § 1-27 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Manu, ix. § 158-160 | 1 | 2 | (b) | 7 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 11 |
| Kālikā Purāṇa, 3 Dig. 155. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yājñavalkya, ii. § 128-132 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 11 | — | 7 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 10 |
| Nārada, xiii. § 43-46 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 | — | 9 | 11 | 10 | 8 | 12 |
| Sancha and Licchita, 3 Dig. 151 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 11 | 9 | — | 10 | 7 | 12 |
| Hārta, 3 Dig. 152 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 10 | — | 7 | 12 | 8 | 9 | 11 |
| Devāla, 3 Dig. 153 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 7 | — | 9 | 11 | 12 | 6 | 10 |
| Yāna, 3 Dig. 154 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 | — | 9 | 10 | 11 | 7 | 12 |
| Vṛhaspati, 3 Dig. 162, 171 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 9 | 11 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 4 | — |
| Brāhma Purāṇa, 3 Dig. 174 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 12 | 4 | — | 9 | 6 | 11 |

Vijñāneśvara quotes both Yājñavalkya and Manu, but seems to follow the latter as to the order of the sons. Mit. i. 11, § 30, 31.

Jimūta Vāhana follows Devāla. D. Bh. x. § 7.

The Smṛiti Chandrica follows Manu. Chap. x.

(a) Mitāksharā (i. 11, § 35) explains the low position assigned by Gautama to the son of an appointed daughter as being relative to one differing in tribe.

(b) The son of an appointed daughter is not specified in Manu's list of twelve sons. He had been already described, and stated to be equal to an actual son. Manu, ix. § 134-136.

very existence of a tribe, surrounded by enemies, would depend upon the continual multiplication of its males. The sonless father would find himself without protection or support in sickness or old age, and would see his land passing into other hands, when he became unable to cultivate it. The necessity for male offspring extended in the case of the Aryan even beyond this world. His happiness in the next depended upon his having a continuous line of male descendants, whose duty it would be to make the periodical offerings for the repose of his soul. Hence the works of the Sanskrit sages state it to be the first duty of man to become the possessor of male offspring, and imprecate curses upon those who die without a son (z). Where a son was so indispensable we might expect that every contrivance would be exhausted to procure one. What has been already said about the relations between the sexes in early times, would make it certain that neither delicacy nor sentiment would stand in the way.

Theory of
paternity among
Hindus.

§ 65. A frequent subject for discussion in Manu is as to the property in a child. He says : " They consider the male issue of a woman as the son of the lord ; but on the subject of that lord, a difference of opinion is mentioned in the Veda ; some giving that name to the real procreator of the child, and others applying it to the married possessor of the woman." He argues the point on the analogy of seed sown by a stranger on the land of another, or of flocks impregnated by a strange male. He sums up by declaring : " Thus men who have no marital property in women, but sow in the fields owned by others, may raise up fruit to the husbands, but the procreator can have no advantage from it. Unless there be a special agreement between the owners of the land and of the seed, the fruit belongs clearly to the landowner, for the receptacle is more important than the seed. But the owners of the seed and of the soil may be considered in this world as joint owners of the crop, which they agree by special compact, in consideration of the seed, to divide between them" (a). The conflicting opinions referred to by Manu are probably the texts mentioned

(z) Vāsisht. xvii. § 1—5 ; Vish. xv. § 43—46 ; Manu, vi. § 36, 37, ix. § 45 ; Atri. D. M. i. § 3.

(a) Manu, ix. § 32—44, 48—55, 181 ; x. § 70 ; Nār. xii. § 56—60.

by the early Sûtra writers (b). In one of these passages quoted from the Vedas, a husband is reported as announcing, with considerable *naïveté*, that he will not any longer allow his wives to be approached by other men, since he has received an opinion "that a son belongs to him who begot him in the world of Yâma." In this world, it is to be observed, there seems to be no doubt entertained that the son begotten by others on his wife would be his own.

§ 66. It was upon this principle, viz. that a son, by whomsoever begotten, was the property of the husband of the mother, that the *kshetraja*, or son begotten upon a wife, ranked so high in the list of subsidiary sons. The Mahâbhârata and Vishṇu Purâṇa relate how king Saudâsa, being childless, induced Vâsishṭa to beget for him a son upon his wife Damayanti. So king Kalinga is represented as requesting the old Rishi Dirghatamas to beget offspring for him, and Pându, when he became a Sannyâsin, accepted, as his own, sons begotten upon his wife by strangers. The same passage of the Mahâbhârata which relates how Svetaketu put an end to promiscuous intercourse on the part of husbands and wives, also states that a wife, when appointed by her husband to raise up seed to him by connection with another man, is guilty of sin if she refuses (c). And so the law-books expressly sanction the begetting of offspring by another on the wife of a man who was impotent, or disordered in mind, or incurably diseased, and the son so begotten belonged to the incapacitated husband (d). No rule is laid down that the person employed to beget offspring during the husband's life should be a near relation, or any relation (e). In fact, in the instances just mentioned, the procreator, who was called in aid, was not only not of the same family, but was not even of the same caste, the owner of the wife being a Kshatriya, and his assistant being a Brâhman.

Origin of the
Niyoga.

(b) A'past. ii. 13, § 6, 7, and note; Baudh. ii. 2, § 25; Vâsish. xvii. § 6, 7.

(c) Muir, A. S. T. i. 418, 419; Wilson, Works, v. 310; M. Müller, A. S. Lit. 56; 3 Dig. 252.

(d) Baudh. ii. 2, § 12; Manu, ix. § 162, 167, 203. § 162 shows that a man might have a son begotten by procuration, and also a son begotten by himself.

(e) A'pastamba, who is strongly opposed to the *Niyoga*, says (ii. 10, § 27) that a husband shall not make over his wife, who occupies the position of a gentilis, to others than to his gentilis in order to cause children to be begotten for himself. It is probable that this refers to an authority to beget after the husband's death. If not, it is merely a restriction on the old usage.

Offspring
begotten upon a
widow.

§ 67. The begetting of offspring upon the widow of a man who had left no issue is, of course, merely an extension of the practice just discussed (*f*). But there was this difference between the two cases, that in the latter, for the first time, the element of fiction was introduced. In the former case the husband became the father, not by any fiction of paternity, but by the simple fact that he was the owner of the mother. But after his death the ownership had ceased; unless indeed, by another fiction, he was considered as still surviving in her (*g*). Therefore, unless the husband had given express directions during his lifetime, the process to be adopted was to be as like as possible to an actual begetting by him, or was to be such a substituted begetting as he would probably have sanctioned. Hence, such a connection was never permitted when the widow had issue already. Nor was it to be continued further than was necessary for the purpose of conception. Nor was it allowable to procreate more than one son, though at one time it was thought that a second might lawfully be produced (*h*). Nor was the widow allowed to consort with any one she pleased, or to do so at all merely of her own free will. The procreator was to be the brother of the deceased if possible, or if he was not attainable, a near sapinda (*i*). This was either to enhance the fiction of paternity, or, perhaps still further to exclude any personal feeling on the part of the widow. Further, some authorisation was necessary, though it is not very clearly stated by whom it was to be given. In a legend mentioned in the Mahâbhârata, Vyâsa begets children on both the widows of his brother, at the request of Satyavat, the mother of the deceased (*k*). Nârada speaks of the authorisation as being given to the widow by her spiritual parents, or by her rela-

(*f*) This alone is the *levirate* referred to by Mr. McLennan, see Fort. Rev., May, 1877. The general usage of begetting a son upon the wife of another on his behalf was known by the term *Niyoga*, of which the *levirate* was only a special instance.

(*g*) Manu, ix. § 45; Vrihaspati, 3 Dig. 453.

(*h*) Manu, ix. § 58—63, 143, 147; Nârada, xii. § 62, 80—88; Yâma, 2 Dig. 468.

(*i*) Gautama, xxviii. § 20; Manu, ix. § 59; Nârada, xii. § 80—88; Yâjñavalkya ii. § 128. Manu permits either a brother or another. Yâjñavalkya, either a relative or another. Kullûka Bhaṭṭa in his gloss adds the word *sapinda* as limiting the vague word *another*.

(*k*) Ind. Wisd. 376.

tions. Manu merely speaks of her being authorised, to which Kullûka Bhaṭṭa adds *by the husband or spiritual guide*. Yājñavalkya refers to the authority of the latter (l). It is quite plain that even the brother could not perform the act without some external authority.

§ 68. If I am right in this view, it is evident that the *levirate*, as practised among the Áryan Hindus, was not a survival of polyandry. The *levir* did not take his brother's widow as his wife. He simply did for his brother or other near relation, when deceased, what the latter might have authorised him or any other person to do during his lifetime. And this of course explains why the issue so raised belonged to the deceased and not to the begetter. If it were a relic of polyandry, the issue would belong to the surviving polyandrous husband, and the wife would pass over to him as his wife. Such a course would have been natural enough even among Hindus, and, as we shall see presently, the practice actually existed (m). But it is something completely different from the Hindu *Niyoga*. And the same explanation which accounts for the origin of the *levirate* also accounts for its extinction. As soon as any idea of mutual fidelity, sentiment, or delicacy arose as an element in the marriage union, the notion of allowing issue to be begotten on a wife would become most repulsive. And as that practice died away, the usage of authorising it in regard to a widow would naturally die away also, though it might continue longer in the latter case than in the former. We can see that a considerable amount of refinement in the relations between man and wife had already sprung up at the date of our compilation of Manu (n), and we can understand how it came about, that texts were interpolated forbidding a practice which the preceding texts had sanctioned and regulated (o). The *Niyoga* would also become unpopular, as partition became more common. So long as the family remained undivided, the afterborn son would be merely an additional mouth to feed, accompanied by a pair of hands to work, and he would take

Niyoga not connected with polyandry.

(l) Nārada xii. § 80—87; Manu, ix. § 58; Yājñavalkya ii. § 68.

(m) *Post*, § 69.

(n) Manu, iii. § 45, 55—62, ix. § 101—105.

(o) Manu, ix. § 64—68.

upon himself the entire duty of performing the recurring ceremonies to his quasi-father. But as soon as the practice of division sprang up, he would be entitled to claim a share, and to stand generally in his parent's place. At one time, too, it appears that the widow had a right to manage the property of her deceased husband on his behalf (*p*). Naturally the relations would cease to authorise an act which tended to defeat their own rights.

Marriage of
widow with
husband's
brother.

§ 69. The actual marriage of a widow with the brother of her deceased husband is of course something quite different from the *levirate*. This was sanctioned by Manu in the single case of a girl who had been left a virgin widow (*q*). The practice still exists in many parts of India. It has been found among the Ideiyars, a pastoral race of Southern India; among the Jât families of the Punjâb, both Brâhman and Râjpûts; and among some of the Râjpût class of Central India. In the Punjâb such marriages are considered of an inferior class, and do not give the issue full right of inheritance (*r*). Such marriages may in some cases be a relic of polyandry, but they seem to me capable of a much simpler explanation. There is nothing in the usage of itself unnatural and revolting. The marriage of a woman with two brothers successively is merely the converse of the marriage of a man with two sisters successively, a sort of union which, though illegal, is by no means uncommon in Great Britain, and which is absolutely legal in several of our colonies. Marriage with a deceased wife's sister is believed to be very common among the lower orders, from the simple fact that a sister-in-law very frequently becomes a permanent member of the family during the life of the sister, and continues in it after her death. She naturally takes the place of her sister as mother and wife. Exactly the same facts would lead to the converse result in a Hindu undivided family. On the death of the husband the widow would continue to reside in the same house with her brother-in-law. He would take possession of all the effects of his deceased brother, not as

(*p*) Manu, ix. § 210, 146, 190.

(*q*) Manu, ix, § 60, 70.

(*r*) Madras Census Rep. 149; Punjâb Cust. 94; Lyall, Fort. Rev., Jan. 1877, 103.

heir, but as manager of the family corporation by virtue of seniority. At a time when women were regarded merely as chattels (*s*), the wives of the deceased would naturally pass over to the manager, who was bound to support them. To take the illustration from Scandinavian history cited by Mr. McLennan: "Now Bork sets up his abode with Mordissa, and takes his brother's widow to wife with his brother's goods; that was the rule in those days, and wives were heritage-like other things." The only difference is, that the Hindu Mordissa would have been living all along in the house with the Hindu Bork, and that on the death of her husband the latter would have become her natural protector and legal guardian. The transition to husband is so natural that it is strange it did not more universally take place.

§ 70. The same principle, viz., that the son belongs to the owner of the mother, can be shown with greater ease in the other cases. The secretly born son is described by Vishṇu as follows: "The son who is secretly born in the house is the sixth. He belongs to him on whose bed he was born" (*t*). Manu is to the same effect, and the gloss of Kullûka Bhaṭṭa shows that the mother is supposed to be a married woman, whose husband's absence makes it certain that he was not the father. Yet the child belongs to him (*u*). In the case of the son of a damsel (*Kanîna*) born in her father's house, if she marries, the son belongs to the husband, and inherits to him. If she does not marry, he belongs to, and is the heir of, her father, under whose dominion she remains (*x*). So, "if a pregnant young woman marry, whether her pregnancy be known or unknown, the male child in her womb belongs to the bridegroom, and is called a son received with his bride" (*Sahodha*) (*y*). As

Son born in secret.

Son of damsel;

or bride;

(*s*) The prohibition against dividing women at a partition (Manu, ix. § 219; Gautama, xxviii. § 45) seems to point to a time when they had been looked upon merely as a part of the family property. Perhaps those curious texts which state the liability of a man who had taken the wife or widow of another to pay his debts, may be founded on the same principle (1 Dig. 321—323, 2 Dig. 476; Nārada, iii. § 21—26; V. May, v. 4, § 16, 17; Spencer, i. 680; *post* § 282. Accordingly Nārada says (iii. § 23, 24), "In all the four classes, wives and goods go together; he who takes a man's wives takes his property also." "The wife is considered as the dead man's property."

(*t*) Vishṇu, xv. § 12, 13.

(*u*) Manu, ix. § 170.

(*x*) Vishṇu, xv. § 10—12; Vāsishṭa, xvii. § 14; Nārada, xiii. § 17, 18.

(*y*) Manu, ix. § 173; Vishṇu, xv. § 15—17; Nārada, xiii. § 17.

or twice married woman.

regards the sons of twice married women (*paunarbhava*), and of disloyal wives, Nārada lays down the same rule. "Their offspring belongs to the begetter, if they have come under his dominion, in consideration of a price he had paid to the husband. But the children of one who has not been sold belong to her husband" (z). Of course the children of a woman who had actually been married to a second husband would, *a fortiori*, have belonged to him (a).

Son by a concubine.

§ 71. The same considerations seem to govern the case of a child by a concubine, who is classed by some writers with the child by a Çûdra (b). The union of a man of the higher classes with a Çûdra was, in the later law, though not originally, looked upon as so odious, that the son was only entitled to maintenance, and not to inheritance (c). And the position of a son born to him by a concubine was no better (d). But the son of a Çûdra by a concubine was always entitled to inherit under certain events. The distinction, however, seems to have been taken, that in order to do so, he must have been begotten upon a woman who was under the absolute control of the begetter. Manu speaks of the son begotten by a man of the servile class "on his female slave, or on the female slave of his male slave" (e). And so Nārada says, "there is no issue if a man has had intercourse with a woman in the house of another man; and it is termed fornication by the learned if a woman has intercourse with a man in the house of a stranger" (f). Obviously, because in the latter case the woman is not under his dominion. Her issue would belong to the person who was her owner.

Son of an appointed daughter.

§ 72. The case of the son of the appointed daughter is a little more complicated, but appears to me to be explicable in the same way. She was lawfully married to her husband. Yet her son became the son of her father, if he had no male

(z) Nārada, xii. § 55. For the definition of a "paunarbhava," see Vishṇu, xv. § 7—9; Manu, ix. § 175; Nārada, xii. § 46—49; Vāsishta, xvii. § 13.

(a) Kātyāyana, 3 Dig. 236.

(b) See Bandhāyana, ii. 2, § 21, 22; Vishṇu, xv. § 27, note.

(c) Cf. Manu, iii. § 13—19, ix. § 145—155, 178; Gautama, xxviii. § 37; Devala, 3 Dig. 135, and other authorities cited 3 Dig. 115—133; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 125.

(d) Mitāksharā, i. 12, § 3.

(e) Manu, ix. § 179.

(f) Nārada, xii. § 61.

issue; and he became so, not only by agreement with her husband, but by a mere act of intention on the part of her father, without any consent asked for or obtained. Hence a man was warned not to marry a girl without brothers, lest her father should take her first son as his own (*g*). Now Vâsishta quotes a text of the Vedas as showing that "the girl who has no brother comes back to the males of her own family, to her father and the rest. Returning she becomes their son" (*h*). In her case, therefore, the father seems to have retained his dominion over her, to the extent of being able to appropriate her son if he wished it (*i*). The same result of course followed, where the marriage took place with an express agreement that this dominion should be reserved (*k*).

§ 73. The remaining sons are all adopted sons, and avowedly the original property of their natural parents. Their case will be separately treated in the next chapter. The only matter of remark bearing on the present enquiry is this; that in two of the cases, viz., the son given (*dattaka*) and the son bought (*krîtaka*), the boy was a minor, and the right in him was given over by those who had dominion over him, and could be given over by no one else (§ 116). In the case of the son made (*krîtrima*), the youth was of full age, and therefore able to dispose of himself; and in the case of the son self given (*svayaṁdattaka*) or cast off (*apaviḍdha*) he had been abandoned, or ill treated by his parents, or had lost them. Their dominion had accordingly come to an end (*l*).

Adopted sons.

§ 74. All of these sons, except the legitimate and the adopted, are long since obsolete (*m*). But Mr. Colebrooke

All but two now obsolete.

(*g*) Gautama, xxviii. § 16, 17; Manu, iii. § 11.

(*h*) Vâsishta, xvii. § 12.

(*i*) In Russia, a father retains his dominion over his daughter after marriage, and may claim her services at his own home if they are required in case of illness, or by the death of his wife. See an article on Marriage Customs, in the Pall Mall Budget, xix. 249, one of a series on The Russians of to-day.

(*k*) Baudhâyana, ii 2, § 11.

(*l*) Baudhâyana, ii. 2, § 13, 14, 16, 19, 21; Vâsishta, xvii. § 17—20; Vishnu, xv. § 18—26; Manu, ix. § 168, 169, 174, 177; post § 92. Similarly in Rome there were two sorts of adoption; *adoptio*, properly so called of a child who was under the dominion of another, and *adrogatio*, of a person who was *sui juris*.

(*m*) Vrihaspati, 3 Dig. 271; Aditya, Purâṇa, *ib.* 272, 288; V. May, iv. 4, § 46; Dattaka Mimâṁsâ, i. § 64; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, x. § 5; 2 Bor. 456; post § 92. The mention of them in works so late as the Dâya Bhâga cannot be taken as any evidence that they were still recognized at that time. See *ante*, § 15.

states that in his time the practice of appointing brothers to raise up male issue to deceased, impotent, or even absent husbands still prevailed in Orissa (*n*). The same reason which caused the *Kshetraja* son to fall into disrepute, necessarily led to the disappearance of several of the others also. The increasing strictness of the marriage tie made a husband refuse to recognize as his son any issue which was not begotten upon his own wife by himself, or at all events might not be supposed to have been so begotten. This would eliminate from the list of sons the *Kanîna*, the *Gûḍhaja*, and the *Sahodha*, unless, in the latter case, the son conceived before marriage was born after marriage (*o*). When a second marriage came to be forbidden (§ 86), the *Paunarbhava* would follow the same fate. The practice of appointing a daughter would also fall into disuse, since so long as it lasted there would be a difficulty in finding a husband for a girl who had no brothers. It was probably at this period that the son of a daughter not appointed came to take the high rank which he at present occupies, in the list of heirs (*p*). The cessation of marriage between persons of different classes (§ 82) would similarly put an end to the *Nishada*. The five sorts of adopted sons would alone remain. These are reserved for future discussion (§ 91).

Eight forms of marriage.

§ 75. The above statements will show that in the view of early Hindu law, sonship was not by any means founded on marriage. A consideration of the marriage law itself will show, that in ancient times it meant something very different from what it does at present. Eight forms of marriage are described by Manu, and in less detail by Nârada and Yājñavalkya (*q*). "The ceremony of Brâhma, of the Devas, of the Rishis, of the Prajâpatis, of the Asuras, of the Gândhârvas, and of the Râkshasas; the eighth and basest is that of the Piçâchas. The gift of a daughter, clothed only with a single robe, to a man learned in the Veda, whom her father voluntarily invites, and respectfully receives, is the nuptial rite called Brâhma. The rite which sages call Daiva, is the gift

(*n*) 3 Dig. 276, note.

(*o*) See *Collector of Trichinopoly v. Lekkamani*, 1 I. A. 283, 293.

(*p*) See *post*, § 447.

(*q*) Manu, iii. § 20—42; Nârada, xii. 39—45; Yājñavalkya, i. § 58—61.

of a daughter, whom her father has decked in gay attire, when the sacrifice is already begun, to the officiating priest, who performs that act of religion. When the father gives his daughter away, having received from the bridegroom one pair of kine, or two pairs, for uses prescribed by law, that marriage is termed *Ārsha*. The nuptial rite called *Prajāpatya*, is when the father gives away his daughter with due honour, saying distinctly, 'May both of you perform together your civil and religious duties.' When the bridegroom, having given as much wealth as he can afford to the father and paternal kinsmen, and to the damsel herself, takes her voluntarily as his bride, that marriage is named *Āsura*. The reciprocal connection of a youth and a damsel with mutual desire, is the marriage denominated *Gāndhārva*, contracted for the purpose of amorous embraces, and proceeding from sensual inclination. The seizure of a maiden by force from her house, while she weeps and calls for assistance, after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in battle or wounded, and their houses broken open, is the marriage styled *Rākshasa*. When the lover secretly embraces the damsel, either sleeping or flushed with strong liquor or disordered in her intellect, that sinful marriage, called *Piçācha*, is the eighth and the basest."

§ 76. It is obvious that these forms are founded upon different views of the marriage relation, that they belong to different stages of society, and that their relative antiquity is exactly in the inverse ratio to the order in which they are mentioned. The last three point to a time when the rights of parents over their daughters were unknown or disregarded, and when men procured for themselves women (they can hardly yet be called wives) by force, fraud, or enticement. But even these three show variations of barbarism. The *Piçācha* form is more like the sudden lust of the ourang-outang than anything human. The first dawning of the conjugal idea cannot have arisen, when the name of marriage could be given to a connection, which it would be an exaggeration to describe as temporary. The *Rākshasa* form is simply the marriage by capture, whose existence, coupled with the practice of exogamy, Mr. McLennan has tracked

Different stages
of law marked
by:

The *Piçācha*;

The *Rākshasa*;

The Gândhârva
forms.

out in the most remote ages and regions. It is at the present day practised among the Meenas, a robber tribe of central India, not as a symbol but a matter of real earnest; as real as any other form of robbery (*r*). The connection between the Râkshasa and the Gândhârva forms is evidenced by the fact that both were considered lawful for the warrior tribe (*s*). The latter is an advance beyond the former in this respect, that it assumes a state of society in which a friendly, though perhaps stealthy, intercourse was possible between man and woman before their union, and in which the inclinations of the female were consulted. Both forms admitted of a permanent connection, though there is certainly nothing in the definition to show that permanence was a necessary element in either transaction. The remaining forms of marriage all agree in this, that the dominion of the parents over the daughter was fully recognized, and that the essence of the marriage consisted in a formal transfer of this dominion to the husband.

The A'sura form.

§ 77. The Ásura form, or marriage by purchase, which the Sanskrit writers so much condemn (*t*), was probably the next in order of antiquity to those already mentioned. When it became impossible or inconvenient to obtain wives by robbery or stealth, and when it was still necessary to obtain them from another tribe (*u*), the only other mode would be to obtain them by purchase. And of course the same system would survive, even when marriage was permitted within the tribe, though not within the family, if an unmarried girl was a valuable commodity in the hands of her own family, either as a servant, while she remained unmarried, or as a possible wife, where the balance of the sexes rendered it difficult to obtain wives. As delicacy increased in the relation between the sexes, marriage by sale would fall into disrepute from its resemblance to prostitution (*x*). Hence Manu says: "Let no father, who knows the law, receive a gratuity however small for giving his daughter in marriage, since the man who through avarice takes a gratuity

(*r*) Lyall, Fort. Rev., Jan. 1877, 106.

(*s*) Manu, iii. § 26.

(*t*) Manu, iii. § 41.

(*u*) See as to this necessity, *post*, § 81.

(*x*) See Teulon, 12. *Tusco more tute tibi dotem quæris corpore.*

for that purpose is a seller of his offspring" (y). The Ársha form, which is one of the approved forms, appears to be simply a survival from the Ásura, the substantial price paid for the girl having dwindled down to a gift of slight or nominal value (z). Another mode of preserving the symbol of sale while rejecting the reality, appears to have been the receipt of a gift of real value, such as a chariot and a hundred cows, which was immediately returned to the giver, much in the same way as our Indian officials touch a valuable *nuzzur*, which is at once removed by the servants of the donor. This arrangement is said by Ápastamba to have been prescribed by the Vedas "in order to fulfil the law,"—that is, apparently, the ancient law, by which the binding form of marriage was a sale (a). The ultimate compromise, however, appears to have been that the present given by the suitor was received by the parents for the benefit of the bride, and became her dowry. The Ársha form.
Manu says: "When money or goods are given to damsels, whose kinsmen receive them not for their own use, it is no sale; it is merely a token of courtesy and affection to the brides" (b). This gift, which was called her fee (*çulka*), passed in a peculiar course of devolution to the woman's own brothers; that is, back again into her original family, instead of to her own female heirs. Origin of dowry
Onerendering of the text of Gautama which regulates this succession, even allowed the fee to go to her brothers during her life. In either view, it was evidently considered to be something over which her family had special rights. If they abandoned the possession, they retained the reversion (c). This was probably the reason that where a girl, who had been allowed to pass maturity, exercised her right of choosing a husband for herself, the bridegroom was not to give a nuptial present to the father, "since he had lost his dominion over her, by detaining her at a time when she might have been a parent." But on the other hand, as the reversion was thus

(y) Manu, iii. § 5, ix. § 98, 100.

(z) Manu, iii. § 29; Yājñavalkya, i. § 59.

(a) Ápastamba, ii. 13, § 12. See Mayr, 155, who compares the Roman "Coemptio," and the German "Fraukauf."

(b) Manu, iii. § 54; Mayr, 157. See a case held to be of this sort in Bombay, *In the goods of Nathibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 9. Mr. McGahan mentions an exactly similar usage as prevailing among the Kirghiz. *Campaigning on the Oxus*, 60.

(c) Mayr, 170.

lost, she was not allowed to carry with her the ornaments she had received from her own family (*d*). If the girl died before marriage, the gifts made by the bridegroom reverted to him, after deducting any expenses that might have been already incurred (*e*).

Essence of remaining forms is absence of equivalent.

Brâhma form.

§ 78. The essential difference between the three remaining forms, viz., the Brâhma, Daiva and Prajâpatya, and those just described, is this; that while on the one hand the girl is voluntarily handed over by her parents, they on the other hand receive no equivalent. The Daiva form is expressly stated to be appropriate to an officiating priest, that is a Brâhman. Manu describes the bridegroom in the Brâhma form as “a man learned in the Vedas,” therefore presumably a Brâhman also. It is probable that these forms first arose in the case of Brâhmans. When mixed marriages were allowed, the great reverence shown to the Brâhman would naturally have led to his being accepted upon his own merits, without any payment. In time the same practice would be adopted, even when he was marrying a girl of his own caste. When these forms came to be universally adopted by the Brâhmans, they would be followed by the inferior classes also as a mark of respectability. Just as a marriage in St. George’s, Hanover Square, is specially prized by persons who do not happen to have houses in that fashionable district. *Primâ facie* one would imagine that a Brâhma marriage, from its very definition, was inadmissible for a Çûdra, and Manu certainly seems to contemplate only the last four as applicable to the case of the three lower classes (*f*). But there is no doubt that the Brâhma marriage has long since ceased to be the property of any class, and the Madras Sudder Court have held that, in the case of Çûdras, the mere fact that the bride is given without the bestowal of any gift by the bridegroom, constitutes the marriage one of the Brâhma form (*g*).

Brâhma and A’sura alone survive.

§ 79. Of these various forms of marriage all but two, the

(*d*) Manu, ix. § 90—93.

(*e*) Yâjñavalkya, ii. § 146; Mitâksharâ, ii. 11, § 30.

(*f*) Manu, iii. § 22—26.

(*g*) *Sivarama v. Bagavan Pillay*, Mad. Dec. of 1859, 44.

Brâhma and the Ásura, are now obsolete. Manu treats the first four as the approved forms, and the latter four as disapproved. He permits the Gândhârva and the Râkshasa to a military man. Nârada forbids the Râkshasa in all cases. Both absolutely forbid the Ásura and the Piçâcha (*h*). The existence of the disapproved forms, or some of them, at a period much later than Nârada, is evidenced by the rules which provide a peculiar descent for the strîdhana of a woman so married (*i*). It is stated generally, that the Brâhma is the only legal form at present, and probably this may be so among the higher classes, to whom the assertion is limited by Mr. Steele (*k*). But there is no doubt that the Ásura is still practised, and in Southern India, among the Çûdras, it is a very common, if not the prevailing, form (*l*). Even there, however, and among Çûdras, it has been held that the presumption will be against the assertion that a marriage is in a disapproved form, and that it must be proved by those who rely on it for any purpose. The same point has been decided by the High Court in Calcutta, as regards Bengal, and seems to have been assumed by the Judicial Committee in a case from Tirhoot (*m*). In a case in Western India, the Çastras stated that although Ásura marriages were forbidden, it had nevertheless been the custom of the world for Brâhmans and others to celebrate such marriages, and that no one had ever been expelled from caste for such an act (*n*). The validity of a Gândhârva marriage between Kshatriyas appears to have been declared by the Bengal Sudder Court in 1817 (*o*). It seems to me,

Presumption as to form.

Gândhârva form.

(*h*) Manu, iii. § 23, 24, 36—41 ; Nârada, xii. § 45.

(*i*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 11, § 11.

(*k*) Gibelin, i. 63 ; Colebrooke, Essays, 142 (ed. of 1858) ; Steele, 159.

(*l*) 3 Dig. 605 ; 1 Stra. H. L. 43 ; Mayr, 155. I have often heard the same statement made, *arguendo*, in the Madras Courts by the late Mr. J. W. Branson, a barrister of great local and professional experience, and thoroughly versed in the languages and customs of Southern India. The statement seemed to be accepted by the Bar and the Bench. Jagannâtha quotes a text from Yâjñavalkya, stating that the Ásura ceremony is peculiar to the mercantile and servile classes, which is not to be found in Stenzler's edition. It ought to come in after i. § 61. See 3 Dig. 604 ; *In the goods of Nathibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 9.

(*m*) *Kaithi v. Kulladasi*, Madras Dec. of 1860, 201 ; *Judoonath v. Bassunt Cooma* ; 11 B. L. R. 286, 288 ; *Mt. Thakoor Deyhee v. Rai Baluk Ram*, 11 M. I. A. 175.

(*n*) 2 Bor. 198, and see 1 Bor. 18.

(*o*) *Hujmee Chul v. Rancee Bhadoorun*, cited S. D. of 1846, 340 ; 3 Dig. 606.

however, that this form belongs to a time when the notion of marriage involved no idea of permanence or exclusiveness. Its definition implies nothing more than fornication. It is difficult to see how such a connection could be treated at present as constituting a marriage, with the incidents and results of such a union.

Power to dispose
of girl.

§ 80. As regards the persons who are authorised to dispose of a girl, Nārada says: "A father shall give his daughter in marriage himself, or a brother with the father's consent, or a grandfather, maternal uncle, kinsmen, or relatives. In default of all these, the mother, if she is qualified; if she is not, the remoter relations should give a girl in marriage. If there be none of these, the girl shall apply to the king, and having obtained his permission to make her own choice, choose a husband for herself" (*p*). Where a father had abandoned his wife and daughter, the mother would be capable to give away her daughter (*q*). But under no other circumstances would a marriage contract be binding without the father's consent (*r*). And the maternal grandmother has a right of disposal superior to that of the stepmother (*s*). Where the natural guardian is a female, she is not necessarily invested with exclusive authority in the matter, as is clear from the fact that the mother, who ranks next to the father as natural guardian, ranks low in the list of relations for the purpose of disposing of her daughter in marriage (*t*). But the High Court of Madras refused to allow a divided uncle to dispose of his niece in marriage without consulting her mother. They admitted that the text of Yājñavalkya (i. § 63) could not be limited to the case of a divided family, but they thought that the object of placing the male relations before the mother, was merely to supply that protection and advice which the Hindu system considered to be necessary on account of the dependent condition of women. That dependence had now practically ceased to be enforced by the law.

(*p*) Nārada, xii. § 20—22; Yājñavalkya, i. § 63.

(*q*) *Bae Rulyat v. Jeychund*, Bellasis, 43.

(*r*) *Nundlal Bhugwandas v. Tapeedas*, 1 Bor. 14.

(*s*) *Ram Bunsee v. Soobh Koonwaree*, 7 W. R. 321.

(*t*) *Per cur.*, 7 W. R. 323.

Where the mother was at once the guardian of the girl, and the legal possessor of the estate out of which the marriage expenses must be defrayed, they considered that she was entitled to be consulted on the one hand, and the male relations on the other, but that the Court would probably interfere to compel the marriage of a girl to a suitable husband, if chosen by either party, and rejected without reasonable cause by the other (*u*).

§ 81. The selection of persons to be married is limited by two rules: first, that they must be chosen outside the family; secondly, that they must be chosen inside the caste. The first of these rules is only a special instance of that singular prohibition against marriage between persons belonging to the same family or tribe which is to be found in almost every part of the world, and to which Mr. McLennan has given the name of Exogamy. According to the Sanskrit writers, persons are forbidden to intermarry who are related as *sapiṇḍas*; that is, who are within five degrees of affinity on the side of the mother, or seven degrees on the side of the father (*x*). The person himself is counted as one of the above degrees; that is to say, two persons are *sapiṇḍas* to each other, if their common ancestor, being a male, is not further removed from either of them than six degrees, or four degrees, where the common ancestor is a female (*y*). This prohibition in the Sanskrit texts is only stated to apply to the twice-born classes. But exactly the same rule against intermarriages between members of the same family has been observed among the Kurumbas of the Nîlgiris, the Meenas of Central India, the Kandhs of Orissa, and among the Drâviḍian races of Southern India (*z*). In Madura, the women of the Chakkili tribe belong to the right-hand faction, and the men to the left-hand (*a*). Evidently a relic of the time when men had to marry women of a different tribe. So the chiefs of the Maravers are accustomed to marry

Persons to be selected.

Exogamy.

Forbidden affinities.

(*u*) *Namesevayem v. Annamal*, 4 Mad. H. C. 339; *Mt. Rulyat v. Madkourjee*, 2 Bor. 680, *ib.* 689.

(*x*) *Manu*, iii. § 5; *Nârada*, xii. § 7; *Yājñavalkya*, i. § 52, 53; see Sherring, *Hindu Tribes*, 7, 21; *M. Müller*, *A. S. Lit.* 387.

(*y*) *Mitāksharâ*, cited 1 W. & B. 143; *post*, § 434.

(*z*) *Brecks*, 51; *Lyall*, *Fort. Rev.*, Jan. 1877, 106; *Hunter*, *Orissa*, ii. 81.

(*a*) *Mad. Manual*, Pt. II. 7.

Endogamy.

Ahambadyan women, and of the children born of such marriages, the males must marry Ahambadyans, and the females must marry Maravers (*b*). Exactly the opposite rule of Endogamy is found to exist among other tribes in the same district. For instance, among the Kallans, the most proper marriage for a man is with his first cousin, that is the daughter of his father's sister or brother, and failing her, with his own aunt or niece. Among the Maravers, also, marriage is permitted between the children of brothers (*c*). In ancient times, the incestuous marriages of the Çākya princes with their own sisters, and the similar intercourse of the Gāndhāra Brāhmans with their own sisters and daughters-in-law (*d*), present an illustration of the same curious conflict of principle.

Mixed marriages
formerly per-
mitted.

§ 82. The prohibition against marriages between persons of different castes is comparatively modern. Originally, marriages between men of one class and women of a lower, even of the Çûdra class, were recognized (*e*), and must have tended strongly to produce that amalgamation of the customs of the Āryans and the aborigines, which I have already suggested as probable (*f*). The sons of such unequal unions were said to rank and to inherit, not equally, but in proportions regulated according to the class of their mother (*g*). Even this rule, however, appears to have been an innovation. Baudhāyana lays it down generally, that "in case of a competition of a son born from a wife of equal class, and of one born from a wife of a lower class, the son of the wife of lower class may take the share of the eldest, in case he be possessed of good qualities" (*h*). All the writers allow marriages between a Çûdra woman and a Kshatriya or Vaiçya, but there is much conflict as to marriages between a Brāhman and a Çûdra woman. Among the Sûtra

(*b*) *Mad. Manual*, Pt. II. 42.

(*c*) *Ibid.* 40, 50.

(*d*) *Wheeler, Hist. Ind.* iii. 102; *Muir, A. S. T.* ii. 483.

(*e*) Apastamba stands alone among the early writers in not recognizing unequal marriages, ii. 13, § 4, 5. It will be remembered that he does not recognize the subsidiary sons either. I cannot account for this difference, unless some passages have fallen out in the text.

(*f*) I take the Çûdras as representing the aborigines in early times, but I am aware there is much controversy upon the point. See *Muir, A. S. T.* i. 140—159, 289—295, ii. 368, 455, 485; *Lassen, Ind. Alt.* i. 799.

(*g*) *Manu*, ix. § 149—154.

(*h*) *Baudhāyana*, ii. 2, § 8. See *Gautama*, xxviii. § 33—36.

writers, the validity of such marriages seems to be undisputed, but there is much variance as to the position of the offspring. Some texts represent him as sharing with the higher sons, others as only inheriting in default of them, others as never taking more than a small fraction of the estate, and others as never entitled to more than maintenance (*i*). The conflict in Manu is still greater, and shows that the present compilation is made up of texts of different periods. Some texts forbid the marriage, some permit it. Some allow the son to inherit, others forbid him to do so (*k*). But perhaps the strongest possible recognition of such marriages is that afforded by Manu himself, when he admits that the offspring resulting from them might in seven generations rise to the highest class (*l*). It seems, however, to have been always admitted that a Çûdra man could not lawfully marry a woman of a higher class than his own (*m*).

§ 83. Marriages between persons of different classes are long since obsolete (*n*). No doubt from the same process of ideas which has split up the whole native community into countless castes, which neither eat, drink, nor marry with each other (*o*). It is impossible now to say when mixed marriages first became extinct. The Mitāksharâ follows Yājñavalkya in recognizing such marriages, though the phrase, "under the sanction of the law instances do occur," seems to show that they were dying out (*p*). They are also mentioned without disapproval by the Dāya Bhāga, Smṛiti Chandrikâ, MādHAVIYA and Varadrājah (*q*). But in the case of the last three authors, at all events, it is probable the discussion was merely introduced to give completeness to the subject, and not because such a practice really subsisted.

Mixed marriages
obsolete.

(*i*) Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 6, 7, 21; Gautama, xxviii. § 33—37; Vāsishṭha, xvii. 21, 25.
(*k*) Of. Manu, iii. § 12—19, ix. § 149—155; Nārada, xii. § 4—6; Yājñavalkya, i. § 56, 57; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ii. 2, § 8.
(*l*) Manu, x. § 64; see, too, § 42.
(*m*) Manu, iii. § 13, ix. § 157.
(*n*) *Vrihat Nārādīya Purāṇa*, 3 Dig. 141; D. K. S. i. 2, § 7.
(*o*) Marriages between persons in different sub-divisions of the same caste, e.g., of Brāhmans or Çûdras, are said to be invalid unless sanctioned by local custom. *Melaram Nūdial v. Thanooram*, 9 W. R. 552; *Narain Dhara v. Rakhal Gain*, 1 Calc. 1. See, however, *Pandaiya Talaver v. Puli Talaver*, 1 Mad. H. C. 478, affd. 13 M. I. A. 141.
(*p*) Mitāksharâ i. 8, § 2.
(*q*) Dāya Bhāga, ix.; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ii. 2, § 6—9; MādHAVIYA, § 24; Varadrājah, 18.

Physical or
mental capacity.

§ 84. As the great and primary object of marriage is the procuring of male issue, physical capacity is an essential requisite, so long as mere selection of a bridegroom is concerned; but a marriage with a eunuch is not an absolute nullity as with us (*r*). Mental incapacity stands in the same position. While the matter rested in contract, no Court, I imagine, would treat a promise to marry a lunatic or an idiot as binding, but the marriage, if celebrated, would be valid. The lunatic or idiot would be incapable of inheriting, but his issue would receive their shares (*s*). A Hindu marriage is the performance of a religious duty (*t*), not a contract, therefore the consenting mind is not necessary, and its absence, whether from infancy or incapacity, is immaterial (*u*).

Polygamy.

§ 85. The efficacy of the marriage tie, as binding either party to the transaction, is a matter upon which there has been a considerable change in the Hindu law, while its earlier stage was evidently in accordance with usages which we find at present existing among the non-Áryan races. Among the Kandhs, "so long as a woman remains true to her husband, he cannot contract a second marriage, or even keep a concubine, without her permission" (*x*). The same rule prevails among the caste of musicians in Ahmedabad (*y*), and seems, from the evidence of the Thesawaleme, to have been in force among the Tamil emigrants into Ceylon (*z*). One text of Manu seems to indicate that there was a time when a second marriage was only allowed to a man after the death of his former wife (*a*). Another set of texts lays down special grounds, which justify a husband in taking a second wife, and except for such causes it appears she could not be superseded without her consent (*b*). Other

(*r*) Cf. Nārada, xii. § 8—19; Manu, ix. § 79, 203. See as to withdrawal from contract, *post*, § 88. *Kanahi v. Biddya*, 1 All. 549.

(*s*) See Gautama, xxviii. § 42; Nārada, xiii. § 22; Manu, ix. § 201—203; 1 W. & B. 288; *Dabychurn v. Radachurn*, 2 M. Dig. 99.

(*t*) Manu, ii. § 66, 67, vi. § 36, 37. See, however, v. § 159.

(*u*) 2 M. Dig. 99, W. & B. 274.

(*x*) Hunter's Orissa, ii. 84.

(*y*) *Muhashunker v. Mt. Oottum*, 2 Bor. 524

(*z*) Thesawaleme, i. § 11.

(*a*) "Having thus kindled sacred fires and performed funeral rites to his wife, who died before him, he may again marry, and again light the nuptial fire." Manu, v. § 168; and see ix. § 101, 102.

(*b*) Manu, ix. § 77—82. This seems still to be the usage among some castes of the Deccan. Steele, 30, 168.

passages provide for a plurality of wives, even of different classes, without any restriction (*c*). A peculiar sanctity however seems to have been attributed to the first marriage, as being that which was contracted from a sense of duty, and not merely for personal gratification. The first married wife had precedence over the others, and her firstborn son over his half-brothers (*d*). It is probable that originally the secondary wives were considered as merely a superior class of concubines, like the handmaids of the Jewish patriarchs. It is now quite settled that a Hindu is absolutely without restriction as to the number of his wives, and may marry again without his wife's consent, or any justification except his own wish (*e*). He cannot, however, divorce his wife except by special local usage (*f*).

§ 86. The prohibition against second marriages of women, either after divorce, or upon widowhood, has no foundation either in early Hindu law or custom. Passages of the Vedas quoted by Dr. Mayr sanction the remarriage of widows (*g*). And the second marriage of women who have left their husbands for justifiable cause, or who have been deserted by them, or whose husbands are dead, is expressly sanctioned by the early writers (*h*). The authority of Manu is strongly on the other side, but I think it is plain that this is one of the many instances in which the existing text has suffered from interpolations and omissions. Manu declares that a man may only marry a virgin, and that a widow may not marry again (*i*). The only exception which he appears to allow, is in the case of a girl whose husband has died before consummation, who may be married again to the brother of the deceased bridegroom (*k*). On the other hand, two other texts appear to recognize and sanction the second marriage,

Second marriages of women formerly allowed.

(*c*) Manu, iii. § 12, viii. § 204, ix. § 85—87.

(*d*) See Manu, iii. § 12, 14, ix. § 107, 122—125; *post*, § 461.

(*e*) Dāya Bhāga, ix. § 6, note; 1 Stra. H. L. 56; Steele, 168; *Huree Bhaee v. Nuthoo Kooper*, 1 Bor. 59; *Virasawmy v. Appasawmy Chetty*, 1 Mad. H. C. 375.

(*f*) Such a usage has been affirmed in Assam. *Kudomee v. Toteeram*, 3 Calc. 305.

(*g*) Mayr, 181. It is now restored by Act XV of 1856, see *post*, § 472.

(*h*) Nārada, xii. § 97—101; see too § 18, 19, 24, 46—49, 62; Devala, 2 Dig. 470; Baudhāyana, ii. § 20; Vāsishta, xvii. § 13; Kātyāyana, 3 Dig. 236.

(*i*) Manu, viii. § 226, v. § 161—163. See to the same effect, A'pastamba, ii. 13, § 4.

(*k*) Manu, ix. § 69, 70; *ante*, § 69.

Probable omission in present text of Manu.

either of a widow or of a wife forsaken by her husband (*l*). The contradiction appears to arise from the deliberate omission of part of the original text in an earlier portion of the same chapter. At ix. § 76 a wife whose husband resides abroad, is directed to wait for him eight, six, or three years according to the reason for his original absence. Nothing is said as to what is to happen at the end of the time. Kullûka Bhaṭṭa inserts a gloss:—"after these terms have expired, she must follow him" (*m*). Now if we look to the corresponding part of Nārada, who had an earlier text of Manu before him (*n*), we find that he lays down that "there are five cases in which a woman may take another husband; her first husband having perished, or died naturally, or gone abroad, or if he be impotent, or have lost his caste." Then follow the periods during which a woman is to wait for her absent husband, and the whole thing is made into sense, by the direction, that when the time has expired she may betake herself to another man (*o*). Nothing is said about her following him, which after such an absence would probably be impossible or useless. If a similar passage had followed § 76 in Manu, the texts at § 175, 176 would be intelligible and consistent. When second marriages were no longer allowed, these passages seem to have been left out, and others of an exactly opposite character were inserted; the texts at § 175, 176 then became unmeaning, but they were retained to explain the phrase, "son of an unmarried woman," which had already appeared in the list of subsidiary sons. It is probable that the change of usage on this point arose from the influence of Brâhmanical opinion, marriage coming to be looked upon as a sort of sacrament, the effect of which was indelible. A similar cause has produced that difference of opinion upon the legality of marriage following upon divorce which prevails in Protestant and Roman Catholic countries. If it is asked why the law varied in exactly the opposite direction in regard to second marriages of men, the

(*l*) Manu, ix. § 175, 176. See 1 Gib. 34, 104.

(*m*) This is apparently founded on a text attributed to Vâsishṭa, cited 2 Dig. 472, which is to the same effect.

(*n*) See *ante*, § 21; Introd. to Nārada.

(*o*) Nārada, xii. § 97—101. See also authorities, *ante*, note (*f*.)

only answer I can suggest is, that men have always moulded the law of marriage so as to be most agreeable to themselves.

§ 87. When we examine the usages of the aboriginal races, or of those who have not come under Brâhmanical influence, we find a system prevailing exactly like that described by Nârada. Among the Jât population of the Punjâb, not only a widow, but a wife who has been deserted or put away by her husband, may marry again, and will have all the rights of a lawful wife (*p*). In Western India, the second marriage of a wife or widow (called *Pat* by the Mahrattas, and *Natra* in Guzerat) is allowed among all the lower castes. The cases in which a wife may re-marry are stated by Mr. Steele as being, if the husband prove impotent, or the parties continually quarrel; if the marriage were irregularly concluded; if by mutual consent the husband breaks his wife's neck-ornament, and gives her a *chor-chittee* (writing of divorcement), or if he has been absent and unheard of for twelve years. Should he afterwards return, she may live with either party at her own option, the person deserted being reimbursed his marriage expenses. A widow's *pat* is considered more honourable than a wife's, but children by *pat* are equally legitimate with those by a first marriage (*q*). The right to a divorce and second marriage has been repeatedly affirmed by the Bombay Courts (*r*). So in Southern India widow marriage and divorce is common among many of the lower castes, such as the Vellalans of the Palanis, the Maravers (except in the case of the women of the Sambhu Nattan division), the Kallans, the Pallans (*s*), the tank-diggers, the potters, the barbers, and the pariahs generally (*t*). In the better classes, such as the oilmongers, the weavers, and a wandering class

Usage of other tribes.

Second marriages and divorce.

(*p*) Punjâb Cust. 95.

(*q*) Steele, 26, 159, 168; 1 W. & B. 139 to 146, 162, 163, 167. The futwahs recorded at pp. 112, 114, 139, 141, were evidently given by Çâstris, who treated such second marriages as illegal. See too 1 Bor. 59, note.

(*r*) As to divorce see *Kaseeram v. Umbaram*, 1 Bor. 387; *Kasee Doollubh v. Rutton Bae*, ib. 410; *Muhashunker v. Mt. Oottum*, 2 Bor. 524; *Dyaram Doollubh v. Bae Umba*, Bellasis, 36. As to widow marriage, *Hurkoonwur v. Rutton Bae*, 1 Bor. 431; *Treekumjee v. Mt. Laro*, 2 Bor. 361; *Bae Rutton v. Lalla Munnohur*, Bellasis, 86; *Bae Sheo v. Ruttonjee*, Morris, Pt. I. 103. See *per curiam*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 114; *Reg. v. Sambhu*, ib. 347.

(*s*) Mad. Manual, Pt. II. 33, 40, 58; *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga Taver*, 6 Mad. H. C. 329; *Murugayi v. Viramakali*, 1 Mad. L. R. 226.

(*t*) Madras Census Report, 157, 159, 164, 171.

of minstrels, called the Bhat Rājahs, who claim to be Kshatriyas, it is found in some localities and not in others (*u*). It is not practised at all among the Brāhman and Kshatriyas, or among the higher classes of Qūdras, such as the shepherds, the Komaty caste, the writers, or the five artisan classes, who claim equality with the Brāhman and wear the thread (*x*). The degree in which divorce and widow marriage prevails is probably in the direct ratio to the degree in which the respective castes have imitated Brāhman habits. The Thesawaleme treats widow marriage as a matter of course (*y*), and we may fairly assume that it was so originally among all the Tamil races.

Betrothal

is revocable.

Result of breach
of contract.

§ 88. Marriage is not to be confounded with betrothal. The one is a completed transaction; the other is only a contract. Manu says, "Neither ancients nor moderns who were good men have ever given a damsel in marriage after she had been promised to another man" (*z*). But Nārada and Yājñavalkya both admit the right of a father to annul a betrothal to one suitor, if a better match presents himself; and either party to the contract is allowed to withdraw from it, where certain specified defects are discovered (*a*). Nārada states that a man who withdraws from his contract without proper cause, may be compelled to marry the girl even against his will. But it is now settled by decision that a contract to marry will not be specifically enforced, and that the only remedy is by an action for damages (*b*). All expenses resulting from the abortive contract would be recoverable in such an action (*c*). Of course no such claim could be maintained where the contract failed from the wilful or negligent conduct of the complaining party (*d*). Probably the real difficulty has often been to distinguish between two things which are sometimes called by the same name, viz., the

(*u*) Madras Census Report, 141, 143, 155.

(*x*) Ibid. 137, 140, 143, 149, 152.

(*y*) Thesawaleme, i. § 10.

(*z*) Manu, ix. § 99.

(*a*) Nārada, xii. § 30—38; Yājñavalkya, i. § 65, 66; Vāsishta, 2 Dig. 487, 490; Kātyāyana, ib. 491; Mitāksharā, ii. 11, § 27.

(*b*) Nārada, xii. § 35; *Umed Kika v. Nagindas*, 7 Bomb. O. C. 122; *Norbut Singh v. Mt. Lad Kooer*, 5 N. W. P. H. C. 102; *re Gunput Narain Singh*, 1 Calc. 74.

(*c*) Mitāksharā, ii. 11, § 28.

(*d*) *Divi Virasalingam v. Alaturti Ramaya*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 274.

betrothal, which is only a promise to marry, and the pledging of troth, which forms part of the marriage itself. The former class of betrothal is often celebrated with much ceremony, but this does not alter its character. So in the actual marriage there are numerous formalities, and many recitals of holy texts, but the operative part of the transaction consists in the seven steps taken by the bridal pair. On the completion of the last step, the actual marriage has taken place (*e*). Till then it is imperfect and revocable. Even this proceeding, however, is not absolutely essential. It is a form which, if complied with, is conclusive. But if it is shown that by the custom of the caste or district, any other form is considered as constituting a marriage, then the adoption of that form, with the intention of thereby completing the marriage union, is sufficient (*f*). In some communities there is a custom that after the actual marriage has taken place a further ceremony must be performed before cohabitation, and if the man who has gone through the first ceremony declines to perform the second, the girl may lawfully marry again (*g*). But the legal result of such a custom would appear to be, that there is no binding and complete marriage until after the second ceremony.

§ 89. A marriage actually and properly celebrated will be legal and binding, although it has taken place in violation of a previous agreement to marry another person (*h*); or although it had been performed without the consent of the person whose consent ought to have been obtained (*i*). For this is one of the cases in which necessity compels the application of the maxim, *Factum valet, quod fieri non debuit*. When the marriage is once completed, if either party refuses to live with the other, the case is no longer one for specific performance of a contract, but for restitu-

Irregular marriage:

(*e*) Manu, ix. § 227; Nārada, xii. § 2; Yāma, 2 Dig. 488; Coleb. Essays, 128. See cases last cited.

(*f*) Manu, iii. § 35; see futwah, 2 M. Dig. 45; *Gatha Ram v. Moohita Kochin*, 14 B. L. R. 298.

(*g*) *Boolchand v. Janokee*, 25 W. R. 386.

(*h*) *Khooshal v. Bhugwan Motee*, 1 Bor. 138.

(*i*) *Bae Rulyat v. Jeychund*, Bellasis, 43.

how enforced. tion of conjugal rights. It has long since been settled that such a suit would lie between Hindus, but there was much conflict of authority as to the mode in which the decree was to be enforced (*k*). The point has now been settled by s. 260 of the Civil Procedure Code (1877), which provides that where the party against whom the decree has been made has had an opportunity of obeying it, and has wilfully failed to do so, it may be enforced by imprisonment, or

Custody of wife. by attachment of property, or by both. *Primâ facie* the husband is the legal guardian of his wife, and is entitled to require her to live in his house, from the moment of the marriage, however young she may be. But this right does not exist, where by custom or agreement the wife is to remain in her parents' house, until puberty is established (*l*).

(*k*) See *Gatha Ram v. Moohita Kochin*, 14 B. L. R. 298.

(*l*) *Kateeran Dokhanee v. Mt. Gandhanee*, 23 W. R. 178; *Suntosh Ram v. Gera Pattuck*, ib. 22. See *post*, § 380.

CHAPTER V.

FAMILY RELATIONS.

Adoption.

§ 90. THERE is a singular disproportion between the space necessarily devoted to adoption in the English works on Hindu law, and that which it occupies in the early law-books. One might read through all the texts from the Sûtra writers down to the Dâya Bhâga without discovering that adoption is a matter of any prominence in the Hindu system. But for the two treatises by Devaṇḍa Bhaṭṭa and Nanda Paṇḍita, it may almost be affirmed that Englishmen would never have discovered the fact at all. Even in Jagannâtha's Digest, the subject only takes up thirty-two pages. The fact is that the law of adoption, as at present administered, is a purely modern development from a very few old texts. The very absence of direct authority has caused an immense growth of subtleties and refinements. The effect that every adoption must have upon the devolution of property, causes every case that can be disputed to be brought into Court. Fresh rules are imagined or invented. Notwithstanding the spiritual benefits which are supposed to follow from the practice, it is doubtful whether it would ever be heard of, if an adopted son was not also an heir. Paupers have souls to be saved, but they are not in the habit of adopting.

Little noticed in early writings.

§ 91. I have already (§ 64) pointed out the advantages which all early races would derive from the possession of sons, and the peculiar necessity for male offspring which would press upon the Áryans, on account of their religious system. This want was amply met by the early Hindu law, which provided twelve sorts of sons, all of whom were competent to prevent a failure of obsequies, in the absence of

Importance of sons.

Comparative
inferiority of
adopted son.

legitimate issue (a). For religious purposes, the son of the appointed daughter seems to have been completely equal in efficacy with the natural-born son (b), and where any one of several brothers had a son, the latter was considered to be the son of all the brothers; Kullûka Bhaṭṭa actually adds a gloss: "So that if such nephew would be the heir, the uncles have no power to adopt a son;" and the same view was maintained by Chandeçvara and other commentators (c). It is evident, therefore, that in early times the five sorts of adopted sons must have been of very secondary importance. Āpastamba expressly states that "the gift or acceptance of a son, and the right to buy or sell a child, is not recognized" (d). And Kātyāyana permits the gift or sale of a son during a season of distress, but not otherwise (e). The same low estimation of adopted sons is evidenced by the rank which they occupied in the order of sons. A reference to the table which accompanies § 65 will show, that out of fourteen authorities there quoted only five place even the *dattaka* among the first six. Now this is not a mere matter of arrangement, for they all without exception give rights of inheritance to the first six sons which are denied to the remaining six. No doubt Manu is one of the five who thus favours the adopted son. But it may be questioned whether his text has not undergone an alteration in that respect. Both Yājñavalkya and Nārada, who were later than Manu, place the adopted among the later six. Nārada expressly states that he took Manu as the basis of his work. An examination of the marginal references in Stenzler's Yājñavalkya will establish that he did the same. It will be seen by the table that these two agree much more closely with each other, than either does with Manu as it now stands. It is difficult to account for their differing from so high an authority, if they had before them the text which we

(a) Manu, ix. § 180; cf. § 161, which, as explained by Kullûka Bhaṭṭa, seems to be an interpolation, introduced when subsidiary sons had become obsolete. Vṛihaspati, Dattaka Chandrikā, i. § 8.

(b) Vishnu, xv. § 47; Manu, ix. § 127—139.

(c) Vāsishṭa, xvii. § 8; Vishnu, xv. § 42; Manu, ix. § 182; 3 Dig. 266; Dattaka Chandrikā, i. § 21.

(d) Āpastamba, ii. 13, § 11.

(e) Dattaka Mīmāṃsā, i. § 7, 8. Mitāksharā, i. 11, § 10 refers this prohibition to the giver not the taker of the son. A contrary view was taken by Aparārka.

possess. In any case, the mere fact that differences of opinion did exist on such a point, would seem to show that it had not assumed any great prominence.

§ 92. When the number of subsidiary sons was diminished from the causes I have already suggested (§ 74), the importance of the adopted sons, who alone were left, would naturally increase. Even where a brother's son existed, though he might procure for his uncle all the required spiritual blessings, still an adoption would be necessary, "for the celebration of name, and the due perpetuation of lineage" (*f*). As partition and self-acquisition became more common, the latter objects would naturally be more desired. It is singular, then, that we should find the same diminution exhibiting itself in the forms of adoption (*g*). The explanation is probably to be found in the growth of Brâhmanical influence, and the consequent prominence given to the religious principle. If the primary object of adoption was to gratify the *manes* of the ancestors by annual offerings, it was necessary to delude the *manes*, as it were, into the idea that the offerer really was their descendant. He was to look as much like a real son as possible, and certainly not to be one who could never have been a son. Hence arose that body of rules which were evolved out of the phrase of Çaunaka, that he must be "the reflection of a son" (*h*). He was to be a person whose mother might have been married by the adopter, he was to be of the same class, he was to be so young that his ceremonies might all be performed in the adoptive family, he was to be absolutely severed from his natural family, and to become so completely a part of his new family as to be unable to marry within its limits. His

Diminished
number of modes
of adoption.

(*f*) Dattaka Chandrikâ, i. § 22; V. Darp. 739.

(*g*) In addition to the general authorities cited, *ante*, § 74, see as to the obsolescence of the *Kṛita* form, 1 Stra. H. L. 132; 1 N. C. 72; *Eshan Kishor v. Haris Chander*, 13 B. L. R. Appx. 42. As to the *Svayāmdatta*, *Bashetiappa v. Shirlingappa*, 10 Bomb. 268. As to a form called *paluk patro*, *Kalee Chunder v. Sheeb Chunder*, 2 W. R. 281. Other forms might perhaps be valid, when sanctioned by local custom, as the *Kṛita* system is said still to exist among the Gosains, 1 W. MacN. 101.

(*h*) Dattaka Mimāṃsâ, v. § 15. It seems possible that this metaphor is itself a mistake. Dr. Bühler translates the verse, "He then should adorn the child, which (now) resembles a son of the receiver's body;" that is, which has come to resemble a son by the previous ceremony of giving and receiving. See Journal As. Soc. Bengal, 1866, art. *Çaunaka-Smṛiti*.

introduction into the family must appear to be a matter of love and free-will, unsullied by every mercenary element. All these restrictions had the effect of eliminating the other forms of adoption, and leaving the *dattaka* alone in force.

Influence of
secular motives.

§ 93. It must not be supposed that the religious motive for adoption ever excluded the secular motive. The spiritual theory operated strongly upon the Qâstris who invented the rules; but those who followed them were probably in general unconscious of any other aim than that of securing an heir, on whom to lavish the family affection which is so strong among Hindus. The propriety of this motive was admitted by the Sanskrit writers themselves. In the ceremonial for adoption given by Baudhâyana, the adopter receives the child with the words: "I take thee for the fulfilment of religious duties. *I take thee to continue the line of my ancestors*" (i). A text which is by some attributed to Manu, states that "a son of any description must be anxiously adopted by one who has none, for the sake of the funeral cake, water and solemn rites, *and for the celebrity of his name*" (k). And the author of the *Dattaka Chandrikâ* admits that even where no spiritual necessity exists, a son may, and even ought to be adopted, for "the celebration of name, and the due perpetuation of lineage" (l). In fact the earliest instances of adoption found in Hindu legend, are adoptions of daughters (m). The *Thesawaleme* shows that such adoptions were practised among the Tamil races of Southern India (n). At the present day the Bheels carry away girls by force for wives, and then, with a zeal for fiction which is interesting among savages, adopt them into one family, that they may marry them into another (o). The *Kritrima* form of adoption which is still in force in Mithilâ, and which in several particulars strongly resembles that which is practised in Jaffna, has no connection with religious ideas, and is wholly non-Brâhmanical. Among

(i) The whole passage is translated by Dr. Bühler in his article on Çaunaka, Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, 1866.

(k) *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, i. § 9; 3 Dig. 297.

(l) *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, i. § 22.

(m) See *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, vii. § 30—38.

(n) *Thesawaleme*, ii. § 4.

(o) Lyall, Fort. Rev., Jan. 1877, 106.

the tribes who have not come under Brâhmanical influence, we find that adoption is equally practised, but without any of those rules which spring from the religious fiction. One Sanskrit purist actually laid it down, that Çûdras could not adopt, as they were incompetent to perform the proper religious rites (*p*). As a matter of fact they always did adopt, but were expressly freed from the restrictions which fettered the higher classes. They not only might, but ought to adopt the son of a sister or of a daughter, who was forbidden to others; and they might take as their son a person of any age, and even a married man (*q*); that is to say, they adopted persons who made no pretence to religious fitness, but who were perfectly suitable for all other objects. So in the Punjâb, adoption is common to the Jâts, Sikhs, and even to the Muhammedans, just as in other parts of India. But with them the object is simply to make an heir. "The religious notion of a mystical second birth is not imported into the transaction." No religious ceremonies are used. There is no exclusion of an only son, or of the son of a daughter or of a sister, nor is there any limit of age. Of later years, however, a tendency to introduce these Brâhmanical rules is showing itself. The explanation given by Mr. Justice Campbell is interesting, as illustrating the way in which the process has often taken place:—"In Sikh times, when the land was of little value, and young men of much value, the introduction of a new boy into the community was probably looked on with satisfaction. But by the time of our regular settlements the value of land was discovered, and the brotherhood would naturally look to the chances of dividing the land of an heirless co-sharer, rather than to the introduction of an extra hand to share in the profits which had begun to be considerable. Hence the main body of a tribe would be inclined to enter as a custom what they wished should be the custom, and unless there were men with interests to defend, the general wish for the future was entered without protest" (*r*). Among

Adoption among
non-Brâhmani-
cal races.

(*p*) Vachespâti, cited Dattaka Mimâmsâ, i. § 26.

(*q*) See *post*, § 119, 125.

(*r*) Punjâb Cust. 78—83.

the Jain dissenters, and in the Talabda Koli caste in Western India, adoption is also practised, but without any religious significance attached to it, and consequently with a complete absence of the restrictions arising therefrom (s). Among the Ooriya Rājahs of Ganjam, who are Kshatriyas, the exequial rites are always performed by a Brāhman official, who is permanently attached to the family, and who is called the son-Brāhman (t). Yet these Rājahs invariably adopt, as might be expected where an old feudality has to be maintained. In Jaffna the Tamil people adopt both boys and girls; and so little is there any idea of a new birth into the family, that the adopted son can marry a natural-born daughter of the adopting parents, and where both a boy and girl are adopted, they can intermarry (u). The secular character of the transaction is even more forcibly shown by the circumstance that the person who makes the adoption must obtain the consent of his heirs. If they withhold it, their rights of inheritance will be unaffected (x). These facts appear to be of much weight in support of the suggestion I have already made (§ 10), that the spiritual theory is not the sole object of an adoption, even upon Brāhmanical principles, and that it can only be applied with the greatest possible caution in the case of non-Aryan tribes, or such as dissent from orthodox Hinduism.

Early texts.

§ 94. The whole Sanskrit law of adoption is evolved from two texts and a metaphor. The metaphor is that of Çaunaka, that the boy to be adopted must be "the reflection of a son" (§ 92). The texts are those of Manu and Vâsishta.

Manu says (y), "He whom his father or mother gives to another as his son, provided that the donee have no issue, if the boy be of the same class, and affectionately disposed, is considered as a son given, the gift being confirmed by pouring water."

(s) *Sheo Singh v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. H. C. 382, 392; 5 I. A. 87; *Bhala Nahana v. Parbhu Hari*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 67.

(t) This usage was frequently proved in cases in which I was counsel. For instance, in the case of the Scerghur succession, and that of the Chinna Kimeddy taluq. The last alone has been reported (6 Mad. H. C. 301; 3 I. A. 154), but the custom has not been noticed in either of the reports. It was fully set out in the evidence.

(u) *Thesawaleme*, ii. § 4.

(x) *Thesawaleme*, ii. § 1. 5, 6. See *post*, § 115, note. (y) Manu, ix. § 168.

Vâsishṭa says (z), "A son formed of seminal fluids and of blood, proceeds from his father and mother as an effect from its cause. Both parents have power to sell or to desert him. But let no man give or accept an only son, since he must remain to raise up a progeny for the obsequies of ancestors. Nor let a woman give or accept a son, unless with the assent of her lord. He who means to adopt a son, must assemble his kinsmen, give humble notice to the king, and then having made an oblation to fire with words from the Veda, in the midst of his dwelling-house he may receive, as his son by adoption, a boy nearly allied to him, or (on failure of such) even one remotely allied. But if doubt arise, let him treat the remote kinsman as a Çûdra. The class ought to be known, for through one son the adopter rescues many ancestors."

These texts only apply to the *Dattaka* form. The *Kritrima*, which prevails in Mithilâ, but nowhere else, will be treated of subsequently. From this small beginning a body of law has been developed, which will be considered under the following heads:—FIRST, who may take in adoption; SECOND, who may give in adoption (§ 116); THIRD, who may be adopted (§ 118); FOURTH, the ceremonies necessary to an adoption (§ 135); FIFTH, the evidence of adoption (§ 140); SIXTH, the results of adoption (§ 147).

§ 95. FIRST, WHO MAY ADOPT.—An adoption may either be made by the man himself, or by his widow on his behalf. But in either case it is a condition precedent that he should be without issue at the time of adoption (a). Issue is taken in the wide sense peculiar to the term in Hindu law (§ 460). Accordingly if a man has a son, grandson or great-grandson actually alive, he is precluded from adopting. Because any one of such persons is his immediate heir, and is capable of performing his funeral rites with full efficacy (b). But the existence of a great-great-grandson, or of a daughter's son,

Adopter must be without issue.

(z) 3 Dig. 242. The passage from the Grihyasûtra of Baudhâyana, translated by Dr. Bühler in the Journal As. Soc. Beng. 1866, art. Çaunaka-Smṛiti, is almost word for word the same, but contains no limitation as to relationship or class. See also the passage from Çaunaka on Adoption, translated in the same article, which is also given, V. May., iv. 5. § 8.

(a) The same rule prevailed as regards adoption both in Greece and Rome.

(b) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, i. § 13; Dattaka Chandrikâ, i. § 6.

Only one son at a time.

is no bar to an adoption (c). Still less the previous existence of issue who are now dead (d). Nanda Paṇḍita in discussing this subject suggests, upon the authority of a legend in the Purāṇa, that an adoption might be valid even during the life of a natural-born son, if made with the consent of the latter; and in Bengal the validity of such an adoption has been maintained, and also that of two successive adoptions, the latter of which was made while the son first adopted was still alive (e). But the contrary rule is now established, and it is settled that a man cannot have two adopted sons at the same time, though of course he may adopt as often as he likes, if at the time of each successive adoption he is without issue (f). And where an adoption is invalid by reason of the concurrent existence of a son, natural or adopted, the death of the latter will not give validity to a transaction which was an absolute nullity from the first (g). It is suggested by Mr. Sutherland, and assented to by Mr. MacNaghten, that if the son, natural or adopted, became an outcast, and therefore unable to perform the necessary funeral rites, an adoption would be lawful; and a practice to that effect is stated to exist in Bombay (h). But since Act XXI of 1850 a son would not forfeit any legal right by loss of caste. Therefore an adopted son could not, by virtue of his adoption, step into his place on the ground that he had lost his caste. If the question were to arise, it is possible the Courts would refuse to recognize an adoption which could confer no civil rights. The question might, however, become of importance on the death of the natural son without issue.

Bachelor or widower.

§ 96. It has been suggested that an adoption by a bachelor or a widower would be invalid, either on the ground that such a person was not in the order of *grihastha* (householder or married man) or that the right of adoption was only

(c) F. MacN. 149; 1 W. MacN. 66, n.

(d) Çankha. Dattaka Mimāṃsā, i. § 4; Dattaka Chandrikā, i. § 4.

(e) *Mt. Solukna v. Ramdolal*, 1 S. D. 324 (434); *Goureepershad v. Mt. Jymala*, 2 S. D. 136 (174); Steele, 45, 183.

(f) *Rungama v. Atchama*, 4 M. I. A. 1. But an adoption will not be invalid because it is made in breach of an agreement to adopt another person, where such agreement has not been carried out. 2 Stra. H. L. 115.

(g) *Basoo v. Basoo*, Mad. Dec. of 1856, 20.

(h) 2 W. MacN. 200; Steele, 42, 181.

allowed where the legitimate mode of procreation had failed. But it may now be taken as settled that an adoption in either of the above cases would be valid (i). In one case the Madras Sudr Court held that an adoption was illegal which had been effected during the pregnancy of the adopter's wife; not on the ground that she afterwards produced a son, which it does not appear that she did, but because it was "of the essence of the power to adopt that the party adopting should be hopeless of having issue" (k). This principle, if sound, would preclude a man ever adopting until extreme old age, or until he was on his death-bed. It is also opposed to the rules which provide for the case of a son born after an adoption (§ 157). On the other hand, if a wife known to be pregnant at the time of adoption afterwards brought forth a son, it might fairly be held that he was then in existence to the extent of precluding an adoption (l). Therefore that the right of adoption was suspended until the result of the pregnancy was ascertained.

Pregnancy.

§ 97. Where a person is disqualified from inheriting by any personal disability, such as blindness, impotence, leprosy, or the like, a son whom he may adopt can have no higher rights than himself, and would be entitled to maintenance only (m). Mr. Sutherland was of opinion that the adoption itself would be valid, in which case, of course the adopted son would succeed to the self-acquired or separate property of his adoptive father (n). On the other hand, in two cases which Mr. MacNaghten cites with approbation, the Bengal pundits held that the capacity of a leper to adopt depended upon his having performed the necessary expiation. When he had done so the adoption was valid. When he had not done so, or where the disease was such as to be inexpiable, the adoption was invalid (o). This opinion rested on the ground that until expiation he was unable to perform the

Adoption by disqualified heir.

(i) Suth. Syn. 664, 671; 3 Dig. 252; 1 W. MacN. 66; 2 W. MacN. 175; *Gunnappa v. Sankappa*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 202; *Nagappa v. Subba Sastry*, 2 Mad. H. C. 367; *Chandrasekharudu v. Brahmanna*, 4 Mad. H. C. 270.

(k) *Narayana v. Vedachala*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 97. See Steele, 43.

(l) See as to infants in the womb, *post*, § 329, 396.

(m) *Dattaka Chandrikā*, vi. § 81; *Sevachetumbara v. Parasucty*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 210.

(n) Suth. Syn. 664, 671.

(o) 2 W. MacN. 201, acc.; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 11.

necessary religious ceremonies. Accordingly, the Bengal High Court decided that an adoption was invalid when effected by a widow who was living in concubinage, as this made her unfit to take part in any religious ceremony (*p*). In a case before the Privy Council it was argued, and seems to have been assumed, that an adoption would have been invalid, if it had been made while the adopter was still in a state of pollution (*q*). No decision was given upon the point, as the facts which would have raised it were negatived. When the case arises it will require a previous determination of the question, What religious ceremonies are necessary to an adoption, and who must take part in them (*r*).

Adoption by
minor.

§ 98. The law as to the capacity of a minor to adopt, or to authorise an adoption, seems also unsettled. The various acts which constitute Courts of Wards all contain provisions forbidding a disqualified landholder to adopt without the consent of the Court (*s*). It has been held that these provisions do not apply at all unless actual possession has been taken by the Courts of Wards; but that where they do apply, they equally forbid the giving of an authority to adopt, and that an adoption made in violation of them is absolutely invalid (*t*). Under Act IX of 1875, § 3, minority in the case of Hindus now extends to the end of the 18th year, unless in cases where a guardian has been appointed by a Court of Justice, or where the minor is under the jurisdiction of the Court of Wards, in which case it lasts till the end of the 21st year. It has, however, been held in Bengal that both an actual adoption effected by a minor, and an authority to adopt given by him will be valid, provided he has attained years of discretion, and this opinion appears

(*p*) *Sayamalal v. Saudamini*, 5 B. L. R. 362.

(*q*) *Ramalinga v. Sadasiva*, 9 M. I. A. 506.

(*r*) See as to this, *post*, § 137, 138, and as to the grounds upon which disability to inheritance arises, *post*, chap. xix.

(*s*) Beng. Reg. X of 1793, s. 33; LII of 1803, s. 37 (N. W. P.); Mad. Reg. V of 1804, s. 25; Act XXXV of 1858, s. 74; Act IV of 1870, s. 74 (B. C.). This last Act also extends the prohibition to an authority to adopt.

(*t*) *Jumoonce v. Bumasoonderai*, 3 I. A. 72; *Neelkaunt v. Anundmoyee*, S. D. of 1855, 218; *Mt. Anundmoyee v. Sheebchunder*, 9 M. I. A. 237. But see *per Pontifer, J.* *Banee Pershad v. Moonshee Syud*, 25 W. R. 192, 198. It has been held that the corresponding provision in Bombay Act II of 1863, s. 6, cl. 2 only applies as between Government and the person claiming as adopted son, and cannot be taken advantage of by third parties for the purpose of invalidating the adoption. *Vasudevanant v. Ramkrishna*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 529.

to have been approved by the Judicial Committee. Mr. Justice Mitter said: "Every act done by a minor is not necessarily null and void. Those acts only which are prejudicial to his interest can be questioned and avoided by him after he reaches his majority. But no such prejudicial character can be predicated of adoption in the case of a childless Hindu, and as under the Hindu Çâstras a minor who has arrived at the age of discretion is not only competent but bound to perform the religious ceremonies prescribed for his salvation, we cannot hold the adoption made in this case to be invalid, merely because the adoptive father was in the eye of the law a minor" (*u*). The judgment does not state when a Hindu arrives at years of discretion; whether the period is a fixed one, or depends upon the special capacity of each individual. In general, the Hindu law-books speak of the age of discretion and majority as convertible terms, and treat each period as being attained at the sixteenth year. But a further subdivision is stated, viz., infancy to the end of the fourth year, boyhood to the end of the ninth, and adolescence to the end of the fifteenth. This distinction, according to Jagannâtha, regards penance, expiation, and the like. An opinion is also mentioned by him, that the period of legal capacity may be determined with reference to the degree in which a youth has actually become conversant with affairs (*x*). It may be that Mr. Justice Mitter meant, that an adoption would be valid if effected by a boy between the ages of ten and sixteen, who was shown to be capable of understanding the nature of his act (*y*). The actual decision appears to have been as to an authority to adopt given by the minor. Of course he could not authorise an adoption which he could not effect. The converse of the proposition does not seem necessarily to follow. An act done might be valid, though an authority to do it might be invalid.

Age of discretion.

Adoption by wife.

§ 99. As an adoption is made solely to the husband and

(*u*) *Rajendro Narain v. Saroda*, 15 W. R. 548; *per cur.* 3 I. A. 83; *Mt. Pearee v. Mt. Hurbunsee*, 19 W. R. 127; V. Darp. 770, where conflicting opinions are cited.

(*x*) 1 Dig. 291—293; 2 Dig. 115—117; Mitâksharâ on Loans, cited V. Darp. 770.

(*y*) Act IX of 1875 does not settle the point, as s. 2 provides that the Act is not to affect any person in the matter of adoption.

Adoption by
widow.

Mithilâ.

Bengal.

Mahratta.

Southern India.

Benares.

for his benefit, he is competent to effect it without his wife's assent, and notwithstanding her dissent (z). For the same reason, she can adopt to no one but her husband. An adoption made to herself, except where the *Kṛitrīma* form is allowed, would be wholly invalid (a). Nor can she ever adopt to her husband during his lifetime, except with his assent (b). Her capacity to adopt to him, after his death, whether with or without his assent, is a point which has given rise to four different opinions, each of which is settled to be law in the province where it prevails. "All the schools accept as authoritative the text of Vâsishṭa, which says, 'Nor let a woman give or accept a son unless with the assent of her lord' (§ 94). But the Mithilâ school apparently takes this to mean that the assent of the husband must be given at the time of the adoption, and therefore that a widow cannot receive a son in adoption, according to the Dattaka form, at all (c). The Bengal school interprets the text as requiring an express permission given by the husband in his lifetime, but capable of taking effect after his death (d); whilst the Mayûkha and Kaustubha, treatises which govern the Mahratta school, explain the text away by saying, that it applies only to an adoption made in the husband's lifetime, and is not to be taken to restrict the widow's power to do that which the general law prescribes as beneficial to her husband's soul" (e). A fourth and intermediate view was established by the Judicial Committee in the case from which this quotation is taken, viz., that in Southern India the want of the husband's assent may be supplied by that of his sapinḍas. The doctrine of the Benares school, as it prevails in Northern India, appears to be the same as that of Bengal, as to the necessity for the husband's assent; though upon this point a greater difference of opinion has prevailed, from the circumstance that the Vîramitrodaya, which allows the assent of the kinsmen to be sufficient, is an

(z) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, i. § 22; *Rungama v. Atchama*, 4 M. I. A. 2.

(a) *Chowdhry Pudum v. Koer Oodey*, 12 M. I. A. 356. Adoptions by women of the dancing-girl caste rest on a different footing, see *post*, § 180.

(b) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, i. § 27.

(c) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, i. § 16; Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, 74; 1 W. MacN. 95, 100; *Jai Ram v. Musan Dhami*, 5 S. D. 3.

(d) 1 W. MacN. 91, 100; 2 W. MacN. 175, 182, 183; *Janki Dibeh v. Suda Sheo*, 1 S. D. 197 (262); *Mt. Tara Munce v. Dev Narayun*, 3 S. D. 387 (516).

(e) *Per curiam*, 12 M. I. A. 435.

authority in that province (*f*). The result is, that in the case of an adoption by a widow, in Mithilâ, no consent is sufficient; in Western India no consent is required; in Bengal and Benares the husband's assent is required; in Southern India the consent either of the husband or of the sapindas is sufficient. The cases of Western and Southern India alone require any further discussion. Before examining them it will be well to dispose of the other matters relating to an adoption by a widow upon which the law is uniform.

§ 100. No particular form of authority is required. It may be given in writing or in words (*g*), or by will (*h*). It may also be conditional, that is, an authority to adopt upon the happening of a particular event, provided an adoption made when the event happened would be legal. For instance, an authority to a widow to adopt, in the event of a disagreement between herself and a surviving son, would be invalid, because the father himself could not adopt so long as the son lived (*i*). But an authority to adopt in the event of the death of a son then living would be good, and so it would be if the authority were to adopt several sons in succession, provided one was not to be adopted till the other was dead (*k*).

Nature of authority.

§ 101. The authority given must be strictly pursued, and can neither be varied from nor extended. If the widow is directed to adopt a particular boy, she cannot adopt any other, even though he should be unattainable. If she is directed to adopt *a son*, her authority is exhausted as soon as she has made a single adoption, and she cannot adopt a second time, even on the failure of the son first adopted (*l*). Where a man died, leaving his wife pregnant, and authorised her to adopt, in case

Must be strictly followed.

(*f*) 1 W. MacN. 91, 100; 2 W. MacN. 189; *Shumshere Mull v. Dilraj Konwur*, 2 S. D. 169 (216); *Haiman Chull v. Koomar Gunsheam*, 2 Kn. 203; *per curiam*, 12 M. I. A. 440; 2 Mad. H. C. 216; 2 Stra. H. L. 92.

(*g*) *Futwah*, 1 Mad. Dec. 104; *per curiam*, 7 M. I. A. 64.

(*h*) *Saroda v. Tincowry*, 1 Hyde, 223.

(*i*) *Mt. Solukna v. Ramdolal*, 1 S. D. 324 (434); *Gopee Lall v. Mt. Chundraolee*, P. C. 19 W. R. 12.

(*k*) *Mt. Bhoobun Moyee v. Ram Kishore*, 10 M. I. A. 279; *Jumoona v. Bamasoonderai*, 3 I. A. 72; *Vellanki v. Venkata Rama*, 4 I. A. 1.

(*l*) *Per cur.* 12 M. I. A. 356; F. MacN. 156, 175; 1 W. MacN. 89, dub.; *Purmanund v. Oomakunt*, 4 S. D. 318 (404); *Gournath Chowdhree v. Arnapoorna*, S. D. of 1852, 332.

the son to be born should die, and she had a daughter, it was held she could not adopt (*m*). And so it was decided that a direction to a widow to adopt a boy along with a living son, which was illegal and could not be carried out, did not authorise her to adopt after the death of that son (*n*). But an authority to adopt generally, authorises the adoption of any person whose affiliation would be legal (*o*).

Case of Iyah
Pillay.

In one case decided at Madras, the authority to the widow was contained in the following words of her husband's will :—"If Iyah Pillay beget a son, beside his present son, you are to keep him to my lineage." At the testator's death, Iyah Pillay had no second son. Sir Thomas Strange decided that the widow was not bound to wait indefinitely, and he affirmed the validity of the adoption by her of another boy (*p*). This decision is canvassed with much vigour by the author of *Considerations on Hindu Law* (*q*), who argues that the authority was specific, that under it no one could be adopted but a son of Iyah Pillay, that the widow was bound to wait till after possibility extinct of further issue by him, and then that the authority would lapse, from the failure of any object upon whom it could be exercised. Sir Thomas Strange, however, construed the document as evidencing a primary desire to be represented by an adopted son, coupled with a subsidiary desire that that son should have been begotten by Iyah Pillay. In this construction he was certainly more liberal than the Courts have been in the other instances just mentioned.

Adoption by
minor;

§ 102. A widow, who is duly authorised by her husband, may adopt while she is a minor, because the act is her husband's, and she is only the instrument (*r*). I presume the same rule would apply in cases where an authority by his sapindas is requisite and is given. In Western India it is stated that a widow under the age of puberty cannot adopt (*s*). I suppose

(*m*) *Mohendro Lall v. Rookinny Dabee*, 1 Coryton, 42; cited V. Darp. 814.

(*n*) *Joychundro v. Bhyrub Chundro*, S. D. of 1849, 41.

(*o*) 1 Mad. Dec. 105.

(*p*) *Veerapermall v. Narain Pillay*, 1 N. C. 91.

(*q*) F. MacN. 197.

(*r*) 2 W. MacN. 180; V. Darp. 769.

(*s*) Steele, 48.

the reason for the difference is, that there the adoption is the act of the widow, for which no authority or consent is required.

An unchaste widow cannot adopt even with the express authority of her husband, because her dissolute life entails a degradation which renders her unable to perform the necessary ceremonies. This incapacity may, it is said, be removed by performing the penances proper for expiation. But these cannot be performed during pregnancy, therefore while it lasts an unchaste widow cannot possibly adopt (t). Whether this ground of incapacity would apply in the case of Qúdras, depends upon the question, whether in their case any religious ceremonies are necessary (u). or unchaste widow. ✓

§ 103. Where there are several widows, if a special authority has been given to one of them to adopt, she of course can act upon it without the assent of the others, and I presume she alone could act upon it (x). In Bombay, it is said that where there are several widows, the elder has the right to adopt even without the consent of the junior widow, but that the junior widow cannot adopt without the consent of the elder, unless the latter is leading an irregular life, which would wholly incapacitate her (y). Several widows.

§ 104. It is a curious thing, that while the husband's right is recognized to delegate to his widow an authority to adopt, he can delegate it to no one else. In cases where the assent of sapinḍas will supply the place of an authority by the husband, that assent must be sought for and acted upon by the widow. Where no authority is given or required, equally the widow alone can perform the act (z). The reason probably is, that she is looked upon, not merely as his agent, but as the surviving half of himself (a), and therefore exercising an independent discretion, which can neither be supplied nor controlled by any one else. It is no doubt upon the same principle, that an express authority, or even Widow alone can adopt for husband.
Her discretion absolute.

(t) *Thukoo Bae v. Ruma Bae*, 2 Bor. 446, 456; *Syamalal v. Saudamini*, 5 B. L. R. 362, approved by *Mitter*, J., 13 B. L. R. 14. As to the possibility of removing by penance the results of unchastity, see *per Mitter*, J., 13 B. L. R. 39.

(u) As to this, see *post*, § 137.

(x) 2 Stra. H. L. 91.

(y) *Steele*, 48, 187; 1 W. & B. 89; *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 181.

(z) *F. MacN.* 202; 2 Stra. H. L. 94; *Veera-permall v. Narain Pillay*, 1 N. C. 103; *Bhagwandas v. Rajmal*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 241.

(a) See *Vrihaspati*, 3 Dig. 458.

direction, by a husband to his widow to adopt is, for all legal purposes, absolutely non-existent until it is acted upon. She cannot be compelled to act upon it unless, and until, she chooses to do so (*b*). The Court will not even recognize it to the extent of making a declaration as to its validity (*c*). Till she does act, her position is exactly the same as it would be, if the authority had never been given. If she would be the heir to her husband's estate in the absence of a son, she is such heir until she chooses to descend from that position, and she is in of her own right, and not as trustee for any son to be adopted hereafter (*d*). If she is not the heir, she can claim no greater right to interfere with the management of the estate, or to control the persons in possession, than if she had no authority. The only mode of giving it effect is to act upon it (*e*). Nor is there any limit to the time during which a widow may act upon the authority given to her (*f*). In a Bengal case an adoption made fifteen years after the husband's death was supported, and in Bombay cases the periods were twenty, fifty-two, and even seventy-one years (*g*).

No limit of time.

Absence of husband's authority.

§ 105. Having now seen the effect of an authority to adopt when given by the husband, it remains to examine the mode in which it may be supplied when wanting. This can only be in Southern and Western India (§ 99). In Madras the balance of opinion had always been that in the absence of authority from the husband, the assent of sapindas was sufficient. Till very lately, however, the point was certainly open to argument. It has now been definitively settled by the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of

(*b*) *Dyamoyee Chowdhraïn v. Rasbeharee*, S. D. of 1852, 1013; *Bamundoss v. Mt. Tarinee*, 7 M. I. A. 190.

(*c*) *Mt. Pearee v. Mt. Hurbunsee*, 19 W. R. 127; *Sreemutty Rajcoomaree v. Nobocommar*, 1 Boul. 137; Sev. 641, n.

(*d*) *Bamundoss v. Mt. Tarinee*, 7 M. I. A. 169, overruling *Bijaya Dibeh v. Shama Soondree*, S. D. of 1848, 762.

(*e*) *Mt. Subudra v. Goluknath*, 7 S. D. 143 (166).

(*f*) F. MacN. 157; 1 N. C. 111; *Ramkishen v. Mt. Strimutee*, 3 S. D. 367 (489, 494).

(*g*) Anon. 2 M. Dig. 18; *Bhasker v. Narro Ragoonath*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 24; *Brijhookunjee v. Gokulotsaojee*, 1 Bor. 181; *Nimbalkar v. Jayavantrav*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 191. See *Dookhia Dossee v. Rash Behary*, 6 W. R. 221, where it was suggested that a widow could not act upon an authority after twelve years. *Sed quære*.

the Ramnaad Zemindary, and in several other cases which followed, and were founded upon that decision.

§ 106. In the Ramnaad case (*h*), the adoption in dispute was made by a widow, who had taken as heir to her late husband a Zemindary, which was his separate estate. The adoption was made with the assent, original or subsequent, of a number of *sapiṇḍas* of the last male holder, who were certainly the majority of the whole number then alive, if indeed they did not constitute the entire body of *sapiṇḍas*. The only question therefore which required decision was, whether in Southern India any amount of assent on the part of *sapiṇḍas* could give validity to an adoption made by a widow without her husband's consent. The High Court of Madras, after an elaborate examination of all the authorities, came to the conclusion that such an adoption was valid. They relied much on the theory that the law of adoption was founded upon, and a development from the old principle of actual begetting by a brother or *sapiṇḍa*. Arguing from this analogy, they proceeded to say (*i*), "On the reason of the rule, then, it seems to us that if the requirement of consent is more than a moral precept, and it must never be forgotten that in all Hindu authors, as in the works of all authors who expound a system of positive law, professing to be based upon divine revelation, ethical and jural notions are inextricably intermixed, the assent of any one of the *sapiṇḍas* will suffice. If, however, the *sapiṇḍas* are by a fanciful rather than a solid analogy to be treated as a juridical person in which the whole authority of the husband is to be vested, it would be wholly contrary to sound jurisprudence to treat the assent of every individual member as necessary. On the contrary, the will of the majority of individual members must be taken as the will of the body, in any matter not manifestly repugnant to the purpose for which the body was created."

§ 107. The Judicial Committee confirmed this decision

(*h*) *Collector of Madura v. Muttu Ramalinga Saithupathy*, 2 Mad. H. C. 206; 12 M. I. A. 397.

(*i*) 2 Mad. H. C. 231. I have already suggested my belief that the two things were perfectly independent of each other. See *ante*, § 62, *et seq.*

upon the ground of positive authority and precedent, while declining to accept the supposed analogy between adoptions according to the *Dattaka* form, and the obsolete practice of raising up issue to the deceased husband by carnal intercourse with the widow. They then proceeded as follows (k) :—

Judicial Committee.

Undivided property.

“It must, however, be admitted that the doctrine is stated in the old treatises, and even by Mr. Colebrooke, with a degree of vagueness that may occasion considerable difficulties and inconveniences in its practical application. The question who are the kinsmen whose assent will supply the want of positive authority from the deceased husband, is the first to suggest itself. Where the husband's family is in the normal condition of a Hindu family, *i.e.*, undivided, that question is of comparatively easy solution. In such a case the widow, under the law of all the schools which admit this disputed power of adoption, takes no interest in her husband's share of the joint estate, except a right to maintenance. And though the father of the husband, if alive, might as the head of the family and the natural guardian of the widow be competent by his sole assent to authorise an adoption by her, yet, if there be no father, the assent of all the brothers, who, in default of adoption, would take the husband's share, would probably be required, since it would be unjust to allow the widow to defeat their interest by introducing a new co-parcener against their will. Where, however, as in the present case, the widow has taken by inheritance the separate estate of her husband, there is greater difficulty in laying down a rule. The power to adopt, when not actually given by the husband, can only be exercised when a foundation is laid for it in the otherwise neglected observance of religious duty, as understood by Hindus. Their Lordships do not think there is any ground for saying that the consent of every kinsman, however remote, is essential. The assent of kinsmen seems to be required by reason of the presumed incapacity of women for independence, rather than the necessity of procuring the

Separate estate.

consent of all those whose possible and reversionary interest in the estate would be defeated by the adoption. In such a case, therefore, their Lordships think that the consent of the father-in-law, to whom the law points as the natural guardian and 'venerable protector' of the widow, would be sufficient. It is not easy to lay down an inflexible rule for the case in which no father-in-law is in existence. Every such case must depend on the circumstances of the family. All that can be said is, that there should be such evidence of the assent of kinsmen as suffices to show, that the act is done by the widow in the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of a religious duty, and neither capriciously nor from a corrupt motive. In this case no issue raises the question that the consents were purchased, and not *bonâ fide* obtained. The rights of an adopted son are not prejudiced by any unauthorised alienation by the widow which precedes the adoption which she makes; and though gifts improperly made to procure assent might be powerful evidence to show no adoption needed, they do not in themselves go to the root of the legality of an adoption.

"Again, it appears to their Lordships that, inasmuch as the authorities in favour of the widow's power to adopt with the assent of her husband's kinsmen proceed in a great measure upon the assumption that his assent to this meritorious act is to be implied wherever he has not forbidden it, so the power cannot be inferred when a prohibition by the husband either has been directly expressed by him, or can be reasonably deduced from his disposition of his property, or the existence of a direct line competent to the full performance of religious duties, or from other circumstances of his family, which afford no plea for a supercession of heirs, on the ground of religious obligation to adopt a son in order to complete or fulfil defective religious rites" (l).

Express or
implied prohibi-
tion.

§ 108. Of course, in all subsequent instances of adoption by a widow without express authority from her husband, the

Ramnaad
doctrine not to
be extended.

(l) The practice in the Punjâb appears to be exactly the same as that laid down in the *Ramnaad* case. An adoption is there looked upon merely as a mode of transferring, or creating a title to, property. A widow may adopt either with her husband's permission, or by consent of his kinsmen, but in no case against an express prohibition by him. Punjâb Cust. 83.

effect has been to bring the case within, or exclude it from some of the above dicta. I say *dicta*, because the only point actually decided was that the assent of the majority of the sapindas was sufficient.

Accordingly, in a Madras case, which followed shortly after the decision of the Ramnaad suit, an attempt was made to push that doctrine to the extent of holding that the consent of sapindas was wholly unnecessary, and that the widow might adopt of her own authority. But the Court refused to carry the law further than had been laid down in that judgment, in which "there had been the assent of a majority of the husband's sapindas to the adoption on his behalf" (*m*).

Travancore case.

Head of family
must assent.

§ 109. The next case arose in the Travancore Courts, where a widow had made an adoption without the consent of her husband's undivided brother, but with the consent of the divided kinsmen. The Court, after weighing the judgments of the High Court and the Privy Council in the Ramnaad case, decided against the sufficiency of the authorization. The Chief Judge, after observing that a woman under Hindu law was in a perfect state of tutelage, passing from the control of her father to that of her husband, and after his death to that of the head of his family, pointed out that in the absence of the father-in-law, the eldest surviving brother must necessarily be that head. He said, "it is clear to me, then, that the kinsman whose assent the law requires for this act is the one who would be liable to support her through her widowhood, and to defray the marriage expenses of her female issue. In the case of divided kinsmen the case may be different, because no one in particular can claim to control her, or is chargeable for her maintenance; but it seems to be clear that, united as the family is, the natural head and venerable protector contemplated by the *Çāstras* is the surviving brother, or if there are more than one, the eldest of them. It seems to me impossible to affirm that the liability to maintain the widow, and undertake the other duties of the family, is not coupled with a right to advise and control her act in so important a matter as the introduction of a stranger

(*m*) *Arundadi v. Kupppammal*, 3 M. H. C. 283.

into the family, with claims to the family property" (n). It will be seen that this reasoning was approved and followed by the Privy Council in the case which follows.

§ 110. The next case was one of the class contemplated by the Judicial Committee in their remarks above quoted, and exactly similar to that in the Travancore suit, the family being an undivided family, and the consent of the father-in-law being wanting. In it (o) the Zemindar of Chinna Kimedy died, leaving a wife, a brother, and a distant and divided sapinda, the Zemindar of Pedda Kimedy; there were no other sapindas. The deceased and his brother were undivided. Therefore, in default of an adoption, the brother was the heir. The widow adopted the son of the Pedda Kimedy Zemindar, admittedly without the consent of the brother. She alleged a written authority from her husband, but pleaded that even without such authority, she had sufficient assent of sapindas within the meaning of the *Ramnaad* decision. The Lower Court found against her on both points. On appeal, the High Court was inclined to think the authority proved, but reversed the decision of the Lower Court, on the ground that the assent of the Pedda Kimedy Zemindar, evidenced by his giving his son, was sufficient. The Court expressly ruled, and it was necessary so to rule,—1st. That the consent of one sapinda was sufficient; 2nd. That proximity to the deceased with regard to rights of property was wholly beside the question. In the particular instance the assenting sapinda was not only not the nearest heir, but was not an immediate heir at all, because, being divided, he could not take till after the widow.

Berhampore
case.

High Court.

§ 111. The Judicial Committee, on appeal, held that the written authority was made out. It was therefore unnecessary to go into the question of law. But being of opinion that the views laid down by the High Court were unsound, they proceeded to intimate their dissent from them (p).

Judicial Com-
mittee.

In the first place, they reiterated their opinion that speculations derived from the practice of begetting a son upon

(n) *Ramasawmy Iyer v. Bhagaty Ammall*, 8 Mad. Jur. 58.

(o) *Ragunadha Deo v. Sri Broso Kishoro*, 3 I. A. 154.

(p) 3 I. A. 190, 192.

the widow, upon which Mr. J. Holloway had again founded his opinion, were inadmissible as a ground for judicial decision. They also stated that the analogy of that practice would not support the conclusions drawn from it. "Most of the texts speak of 'the appointed' kinsman. By whom appointed? If we are to travel back beyond the *Kāli* age, and speculate upon what then took place, we have no reasonable grounds for supposing that a Hindu widow, desirous of raising up seed to her deceased husband, was ever at liberty to invite to her bed any sapin̄ḍa, however remote, at her own discretion (q); and that his consent of itself constituted a sufficient authorization of his act.

Authority of
separate kins-
man insufficient.

"Positive authority, then, does not do more than establish that, according to the law of Madras, which in this respect is something intermediate between the stricter law of Bengal and the wider law of Bombay, a widow, not having her husband's permission, may adopt a son to him, if duly authorized by his kindred. If it were necessary, which in this case it is not, to decide the point, their Lordships would be unwilling to dissent from the principle recognized in the *Travancore* case, viz., that the requisite authority is, in the case of an undivided family, to be sought within that family. The joint and undivided family is the normal condition of Hindu society. An undivided Hindu family is ordinarily joint, not only in estate but in food and worship; therefore, not only all the concerns of the joint property, but whatever relates to their commensality and their religious duties and observances, must be regulated by its members, or by the manager to whom they have expressly or by implication delegated the task of regulation. The Hindu wife upon her marriage passes into, and becomes a member of that family. It is upon that family that, as a widow, she has her claim for maintenance. It is in that family that, in the strict contemplation of law, she ought to reside. It is in the members of that family that she must presumably find such counsellors and protectors as the law makes requisite for

(q) Gautama expressly declares that "a son begotten on a widow whose husband's brother lives, by another more distant relation, is excluded from inheritance," xxviii. § 20. See *ante*, § 67.

her. These seem to be strong reasons against the conclusion that for such a purpose as that now under consideration she can at her will travel out of that undivided family, and obtain the authorization required from a separated and remote kinsman of her husband.

“In the present case there is an additional reason against the sufficiency of such an assent. It is admitted on all hands that an authorization by some kinsman of the husband is required. To authorize an act implies the exercise of some discretion whether the act ought or ought not to be done. In the present case there is no trace of such an exercise of discretion. All we know is that the *Mahâdevî*, representing herself as having the written permission of her husband to adopt, asked the Râjah of Pedda Kimeddy to give her a son in adoption, and succeeded in getting one. There is nothing to show that the Râjah ever supposed that he was giving the authority to adopt which a widow not having her husband’s permission would require.”

Conscious exercise of discretion.

The remarks last quoted would probably make it difficult hereafter for a widow to plead, as she did in this case, first, that she had express authority from her husband to adopt, and, secondly, that if she had not such authority, the want of it was supplied by authority from kinsmen.

§ 112. In a later Madras case one would have imagined that everything had concurred to place the validity of the adoption beyond dispute. The family was divided, all the sapindas had assented, and the persons in possession of the property had no title whatever. But the High Court set the adoption aside on the ground “that it was not made out that there had been such an assent on the part of the widow as to show, to quote the words of the judgment of the Privy Council in the *Ramnaad* case, ‘that the act was done by the widow in the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of a religious duty;’” and that there was no appearance of any anxiety or desire on the part of the widow for the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of any religious duty to her husband. Her object appeared to have been to hold the estate till her death, and then continue the line in the person of the plaintiff. This judgment was reversed on appeal. The

Guntur case.

Religious motive for adoption.

Privy Council, after pointing out that the facts of the case did not justify the inference drawn from them by the High Court, proceeded to say :—

Judicial Com-
mittee.

“This being so, is there any ground for the application which the High Court has made of a particular passage in the judgment in the *Ramnaad* case? The passage in question perhaps is not so clear as it might have been made. The Committee, however, was dealing with the nature of the authority of the kinsman that was required. After dealing with the *vexata quæstio* which does not arise in this case, whether such an adoption can be made with the assent of one or more sapiṇḍas in the case of joint family property, they proceed to consider what assent would be necessary in the case of separate property; and after stating that the authority of the father-in-law would probably be sufficient, they said: “It is not easy to lay down an inflexible rule for the case in which no father-in-law is in existence. Every such case must depend upon the circumstances of the family. All that can be said is, that there should be such evidence,” not, be it observed, of the widow’s motives, but “of the assent of kinsmen, as suffices to show that the act is done by the widow in the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of a religious duty, and neither capriciously nor from a corrupt motive. In this case no issue raises the question that the consents were purchased and not *bonâ fide* attained.” “Their Lordships think it would be very dangerous to introduce into the consideration of these cases of adoption nice questions as to the particular motives operating on the mind of the widow, and that all which this Committee in the former case meant to lay down was, that there should be such proof of assent on the part of the sapiṇḍas as should be sufficient to support the inference that the adoption was made by the widow, not from capricious or corrupt motives, or in order to defeat the interest of this or that sapiṇḍa, but upon a fair consideration by what may be called a family council, of the expediency of substituting an heir by adoption to the deceased husband. If that be so, there seems to be every reason to suppose that in the present case there was such a consideration, both on the part of the widow and on

the part of the sapinḍas; and their Lordships think that in such a case it must be presumed that she acted from the proper motives which ought to actuate a Hindu female, and that, at all events, such presumption should be made until the contrary is shown" (r).

§ 113. It does not seem quite clear, even now, whether their Lordships are of opinion that the motive which operates upon the mind of a widow in making an adoption can be material upon the question of its validity, where she has obtained the necessary amount of assent: that is, whether evidence would be admissible which went to show that the widow was indifferent to the religious benefits supposed to flow from an adoption to her husband, or even disbelieved in the efficacy of such an adoption; and that her real and only object in making an adoption was to enhance her own importance and position, and to prevent the property of her late husband from passing away to distant relations. With the greatest deference to any conclusions to the contrary which may be drawn from the above passages, it seems to me that the Judicial Committee did not mean to lay down that such evidence would be material or admissible. The fair result of all their judgments appears to be, that the assent of one or more sapinḍas is necessary, as a sort of judicial decision that the act of adoption is a proper one. That decision, like any other, may (perhaps) be impeached, by showing that it was procured by fraud or corruption. But if it was arrived at *bonâ fide* by the proper judges, it is conclusive as to the propriety of the adoption. The judgment of the Court cannot be affected by the motives of the suitor. The reasons which influence the widow may be puerile or even malicious. But what the family decide upon is the propriety of her act, not the propriety of her reasons.

§ 114. Probably in the next case which is disputed, the ingenuity of Hindu litigants will be directed to invalidating the assent of the sapinḍas. Upon this it may be submitted

Discussion as to motive.

Is religious motive essential?

(r) *Vellanki Venkata Krishna Row v. Venkata Rama*, 4 I. A. 1, 13. In this case the husband had died, leaving a son. The decision established that sapinḍas had the same power of authorising an adoption in lieu of a son who died, as they would have had if there had never been a son.

that the real question will be, whether it was given *bonâ fide*, not whether it was determined by religious motives. I have already suggested that even according to Brâhmanical views, religious grounds were not the only ones for making an adoption, and that among the dissenting sects of Āryans, and all the non-Āryan races, religious motives had absolutely nothing to do with the matter (s). But further, when a religious act comes to be indissolubly connected with civil consequences, it follows that the act may be properly performed, either with a view to the religious or the civil results. Not only so, but that if the act is in fact performed, the civil consequences must follow, whatever be the motive of the actor. Marriage is just as much a duty with a Hindu as adoption. It could not be contended that the validity of a marriage, or any of its legal results, could be in the slightest degree affected by the motives of either of the parties to the transaction. When the Test and Corporation Acts rendered it necessary that a candidate for office should have taken the sacrament, it was not material or permissible to enquire, whether the communicant had spiritual or temporal benefits in view.

Western India.

§ 115. In Western India the widow's power of adoption is even greater than in Southern India. The Mayûkha, commenting on the same text of Vâsishtâ, draws from it, as already remarked (§ 99), exactly the opposite conclusion from that arrived at by Nanda Paṇḍita. The latter infers that a widow can never adopt, as she can never obtain her husband's assent; the former infers that the prohibition can only extend to a married woman, as she only can receive such an assent (t). The whole of the authorities are col-

(s) See *ante*, § 92, 93. I have already stated (§ 93) that among the Tamil inhabitants of Northern Ceylon even the husband, when desirous to adopt, must obtain the consent of his heirs, and they must evidence their assent by dipping their fingers in the saffron water. If such consent is withheld, the rights of the dissenting parties to the inheritance will not be affected. Thesawaleme, ii. 1, 5, 6. Probably this was the original law in Southern India, though it may have passed away when the Brâhmanical view of adoption, as a duty and not merely a right, was introduced. But the necessity for obtaining the consent of sapinḍas to an adoption by a widow, and the sufficiency of such consent, may be a survival from the old law. If so, it would be an additional reason for supposing that religious motives had nothing to do with the adoption itself, or with the consent given to it by kinsmen.

(t) V. May., iv. 5, § 17, 18. Dr. Bühler says that the principal argument advanced by the Mahratta writers for this view is a version of the text of

lected and reviewed in several cases in the Bombay High Court, which have established, *First*, that in the Mahratta country, a widow may adopt a son to her deceased husband, without authority from her husband, and without the consent of his kindred, or of the caste, or of the ruling authority. The qualification is added, borrowed from the dictum of the Privy Council in the *Ramnada* case, provided "the act is done by her in the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of a religious duty, and neither capriciously nor from a corrupt motive" (u). *Secondly*, that she cannot do so, where her husband has expressly forbidden an adoption (x). *Thirdly*, that she can never adopt during his lifetime, without his assent (y). A further qualification is suggested by the Bombay High Court, viz., that where the adoption by a widow would have the effect of divesting an estate already vested in a third person, the consent of that person must be obtained (z). This will be considered subsequently under the head of effects of an adoption (a).

§ 116. Among the Jains a sonless widow has the same power of adoption as her husband would have had, if he chose to exercise it. Neither his sanction nor that of any other person is necessary (b). The Court said of this case:—"They differ particularly from the Brâhmanical Hindus in their conduct towards the dead, omitting all obsequies after the corpse is burnt or buried. They also regard the birth of a son as having no effect on the future state of his progenitor, and consequently adoption is a merely temporal arrangement, and has no spiritual object (c)."

§ 116A. SECOND, WHO MAY GIVE IN ADOPTION.—As the act of adoption has the effect of removing the adopted son from

Jains.

Only parents
can give.

Caunaka, where they read "a woman who is childless, or whose sons have died", (may adopt), instead of "a man," &c. The error of this reading is shown by the fact that in the subsequent verses (13, 14) the adopter is referred to in the masculine gender. See art. *Caunaka-Smriti*, Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, 1866.

(u) *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 181, acc. *per curiam*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 257.

(x) *Bayabai v. Bala Venkatesh* 7 Bomb. H. C. App. 1.

(y) *Narayan Babaji v. Nana Manohar*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 153.

(z) *Rupchand Hindumal v. Rakhmabai*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 114.

(a) See *post*, § 169, *et seq.*

(b) *Govindnath Ray v. Gulal Chand*, 5 S. D. 276 (322); *Sheo Singh v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. H. C. 382; 5 I. A. 87.

(c) *Per cur.*, 6 N. W. P. 392.

his natural into the adoptive family, and thereby most materially and irrevocably affects his prospects in life, and as the ceremony almost invariably takes place when the adoptee is of tender years, and unable to exercise any discretion of his own in the matter, it follows that only those who have dominion over the child have the power of giving him in adoption. According to Vâsishṭa (*d*), both parents have power to give a son, but a woman cannot give one without the assent of her lord. Manu says (*e*): "He whom his father or mother (with her husband's assent) gives to another, &c., is considered as a son given." The words in parenthesis are the gloss of Kullûka Bhaṭṭa. Different explanations have been given to Vâsishṭa's text (*f*). Some say that the wife's assent is absolutely necessary; others, that if not given, the adopted son remains the son of his natural mother and performs her obsequies; others, that the words mean that either parent has the power to give, but that the wife can only exercise this power during her husband's life with his assent. The latter explanation is the one which is now accepted. It is quite settled that the father alone has absolute authority to dispose of his son in adoption, even without the consent of his wife, though her consent is generally sought and obtained (*g*). The wife cannot give away her son while her husband is alive and capable of consenting, without his consent; but she may do so after his death, or when he is permanently absent, as for instance an emigrant, or has entered a religious order, or has lost his reason (*h*). But in a Bengal case the pandits laid it down, and it was held accordingly, that an adoption was bad where a widow had given away her only son as *dvyamûshyâyana* without the express consent of her late husband (*i*). It does not, however, appear from the report whether the

Assent of wife.

(*d*) 3 Dig. 242.

(*e*) Manu, ix. 168.

(*f*) 3 Dig. 254, 257, 261; V. May., v.; Steele, 45, 183.

(*g*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, iv. 13—17; v. 14, n.; 3 Dig. 244; *Alank Manjari* v. *Fakir Chand Sarkar*, 5 S. D. 356 (418); *Chitko Ragunath v. Janaki*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 199; *Mitâksharâ*, i. 11, § 9.

(*h*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, iv. 10—12; Dattaka Chandrikâ, i. 31, 32; *Mitâksharâ*, i. 11, § 9; 1 Mad. Dec. 154; *Hurro Soonderee v. Chundermoney*, Sev. 938. *Rangubai v. Bhagirthibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 377.

(*i*) *Debee Dial v. Hur Hor Singh*, 4 S. D. 320 (407).

decision went upon the ground that the adopted son was an only son, or upon the ground that he was given away without sufficient authority. The former seems rather to have been the case. No other relation but the father or mother can give away a boy. For instance, a brother cannot give away his brother (*k*). Nor can the paternal grandfather or any other person (*l*). Nor can the parents delegate their authority to another person, for instance a son, so as to enable him after their death to give away his brother in adoption, for the act when done must have parental sanction (*m*). And therefore an orphan cannot be adopted, because he can neither give himself away, nor be given by any one with authority to do so (*n*).

§ 116B. The person who is authorised to give away a boy in adoption, may make his consent dependent on the fulfilment of certain conditions, and it has been held that where these conditions are not complied with the adoption is invalid. For instance, where a father by letter authorised the giving of his son in adoption, provided the adopting party first obtained the assent of the British Government, an adoption made without such assent was held invalid, though the assent was not in other respects necessary (*o*).

§ 117. The consent of the Revenue Board is necessary to an adoption by a person whose estate is under the actual management of the Court of Wards (*p*). It was once supposed that the consent of Government was also necessary in the case of Inamdars, Zemindars, and feudal chieftains whose estates would fall into the hands of the Government in the event of their dying without heirs, and in the time of Lord Dalhousie this principle was frequently acted on. But it seems clear that though it was customary in such cases to ask for the sanction of the ruling power, and to pay a nuzzur on receiving it, still that the sanction was con-

Consent of
Government.

(*k*) *V. Darp.*, 825 ; *Mt. Tara Mune Dibia v. Dev Narayun Rai*, 3 S. D. 387 (516) ; *Muttusawmy v. Lutchmedavumma*, Mad. Dec. 1852, p. 97. See *F. MacN.* 223, combating *Veerapermal v. Narain Pillay*, 1 N. C. 91.

(*l*) *Coll. of Surat v. Dhirsingi*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 235.

(*m*) *Bashetiappa v. Shivlingappa*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 268.

(*n*) *Subbalavammal v. Ammakutti*, 2 M. H. C. 129 ; *Balvantrav Bhasker v. Bayabai*, 6 Bomb. O. C. 83 ; 10 Bomb. H. C. 268.

(*o*) *Rangubai v. Bhagirthibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 377.

(*p*) See ante, § 98.

sidered to be due as a matter of right, and was not a condition precedent to the validity of the adoption itself, although in some cases the native power, with a high hand, may have refused to allow the adopted son to succeed (q).

Origin of
restrictions.

§ 118. THIRD, WHO MAY BE TAKEN IN ADOPTION.—The restrictions upon the selection of a person for adoption appear all to be of Brâhmanical origin, and to rest upon the theory, that as the object of adoption was the performance of religious rites to deceased ancestors, the fiction of sonship must be as close as possible (§ 92). Hence, in the first place, the nearest male sapinda should be selected, if suitable in other respects, and if possible a brother's son, as he was already in contemplation of law a son to his uncle. If no such near sapinda was available, then one who was more remote; or in default of any such, then one who was of a family which followed the same spiritual guide, or, in the case of Qûdras, any member of the caste (r). Probably this rule was strengthened by the feeling, that it was unjust to the members of the family to introduce a stranger if a near relative was available. Originally it seems to have been a positive precept. Subsequently it sunk to a mere recommendation. It is now settled that the adoption of a stranger is valid, even though near relatives, otherwise suitable, are in existence (s). In the second place, no one can be adopted whose mother the adopter could not have legally married (t). This rule is still binding upon the three higher classes. It must of course be understood as excluding only the sons of women whose original relationship to the adopter was such as to render them unfit to be his wives. A man could not

Nearest sapinda.

One whose
mother could
have been
married.

(q) Steele, 183; *Bhasker Bhachajee v. Narro Ragonath*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 24; *Ramchandra Vasudev v. Nanaji*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 26; *Narhar Govind v. Narayen*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 607; *Rangubai v. Bhagirthibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 377, Bell's Empire in India, 127; Bell's Indian Policy, 10; Sir C. Jackson's Vindication of Lord Dalhousie, 9. By Lord Canning's proclamation the right to adopt has now been recognized in the case of feudal chiefs and jaghiredars.

(r) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, ii. § 2, 28, 29, 67, 74, 76, 80; Dattaka Chandrikâ, i. § 10, 20, ii. § 11; Mitâksharâ, i. 11, § 13, 14, 36; V. May., iv. 5, § 9, 16, 19.

(s) 1 W. McN. 68; 2 Stra. H. L. 98, 102; *Gokoolanund v. Wooma Dace*, 15 B. L. R. 405; affd. 5 I. A. 40; *Babaji v. Bhagirti*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 70. These authorities must be taken as overruling the case of *Ooman Dutt v. Kunhia Singh*, 3 S. D. 144 (192), which was also a *Kritrima* adoption.

(t) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. § 20.

lawfully marry his brother's or nephew's wife, but a brother's son is the most proper person to be adopted, and so is a grand-nephew (*u*). The most common illustration of this rule is the absolute prohibition against the adoption among the three higher classes of the son of a daughter, or of a sister, or of an aunt (*x*). On the same ground it is unlawful to adopt a brother, or an uncle, whether paternal or maternal (*y*). And it makes no difference that the adopter has himself been removed from his natural family by adoption; for adoption does not remove the bar of consanguinity which would operate to prevent intermarriage within the prohibited degrees (*z*). But a wife's brother may be adopted (*a*), and so may the son of a wife's sister (*b*).

§ 119. This rule again appears to be of Brāhmanical origin. The same authorities which lay it down as regards the higher classes, state that Çûdras may adopt a daughter's or a sister's son. The Mayûkha even states that as regards them such a person is the most proper to be adopted (*c*). He is obviously the most natural person to be selected. A mother's sister's son may also be adopted among Çûdras (*d*). In the Punjâb such adoptions are common among the Jâts, and this laxity has spread even to Brāhmans, and to the orthodox Hindu inhabitants of towns, such as Delhi (*e*). They are also permitted among the Jains (*f*), and in Southern India even among the Brāhmans such adoptions are undoubtedly very common, though a recent

Rule not universal.

(*u*) *Morun Moe v. Bejoy Kishto*, Sp. No. W. R. 122.

(*x*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, ii. 32, 74, 91-108; Dattaka Chandrikā, i. § 11; V. May., iv. 5, § 9, 10; *Baee Gunga v. Baee Sheekoovur*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 73; *Narasimma v. Balarama Charlu*, 1 Mad. H. C. 420; *Jivani v. Jivu*, 2 Mad. H. C. 462; *Gopalaiyan v. Raghupatiayan*, 7 Mad. H. C. 250; *Ramalinga v. Sadasiva*, 9 M. I. A. 506, where the side-note calls the parties Vaiçyas, though they were really Çûdras. See 2 Mad. H. C. 467; *Koro Shunker v. Bebee Munnee*, 2 M. Dig. 32; *Gopal Narhar v. Hanmant Ganesh*, 3 Bomb. L. R., 273; *Bhagirtibai v. Radhabai*, 3 Bomb., L. R., 298.

(*y*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, v. § 17; *Runjeet Singh v. Obhya Narrain*, 2 S. D. 245 (315); *Moothosawmy v. Lutchmedavunmah*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, 96.

(*z*) *Moothia v. Uppen*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 117.

(*a*) *Kristniengar v. Vanamalay*, Mad. Dec. of 1856, 213; *Runganayagam v. Namesevoyem*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 94; *Ruvee Bhudr v. Roopshunker*, 2 Bor. 662.

(*b*) *Baee Gunga v. Baee Sheekoovur*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 73, 76.

(*c*) V. May., iv. 5, § 10, 11.

(*d*) *Chinna Nagaya v. Pedda Nagaya*, 1 Mad. L. R. 62.

(*e*) Punjab Cust. 79-83.

(*f*) *Sheo Singh v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. H. C. 382; 5 I. A. 87; *Hassan Ali v. Nagammal*, 1 All. 288.

case has decided that the practice has not attained the force of a legal custom (*g*). In Western India also they appear to be permitted. It is also said that in the Deccan a younger brother may be adopted, and though the adoption of uncles is forbidden, a different reason is alleged for the prohibition (*h*).

Extension of
rule to son of
wife's brother.

§ 120. A singular extension has been given to this rule by Nanda Paṇḍita. He quotes a text of Vṛiddha Gautama:—"In the three superior tribes a sister's son is nowhere mentioned as a son,"—and says that here a sister's son is inclusive of a brother's son. But as the brother's son is not only not prohibited, but is expressly enjoined for adoption, he draws the remarkable conclusion that a brother's son must not be adopted by a sister. And this opinion was acted upon in the N. W. Provinces, where the Court set aside an adoption by a widow, acting under her husband's authority, where she had selected the son of her own brother (*i*). If the adoption had been made by her husband, and not by herself, it would have been perfectly valid (*j*). The same principle seems to have been the ground of a case which is reported and discussed at much length by Sir F. MacNaghten (*k*). There a man died leaving three widows, and an authority to them to adopt. As they could not agree, a reference was made to the Master, who reported in favour of a boy who was the son of the second widow's uncle. The next question that arose was, whether the boy could be received in adoption by the second widow. It was argued that this was impossible, because she could not without incest have been the mother of a boy by her own uncle. The pandits differed, and no decision was ever given, the second widow having waived her right in favour of the elder. Sir F. MacNaghten, however, pronounces unhesitatingly in favour of the objection. It seems to me, however, with the greatest respect, that this is intro-

(*g*) *Gopalyan v. Raghupatiayan*, 7 Mad. H. C. 250; 2 Stra. H. L. 101; 1 Gibelin, 89.

(*h*) Steele, 44; 2 Bor. 85.

(*i*) *Dattaka Mimāṃsā*, ii. § 33, 34; *Mt. Battas Kuar v. Lachman Singh*, 7 N. W. P. H. C. 117.

(*j*) See authorities quoted § 118, notes (*z*) (*a*).

(*k*) *Dagumbaree v. Taramonee*, F. MacN. 170, App. 10.

ducing into the Hindu theory of adoption a second fiction for which there is no foundation. The real fiction is, that the adopting father had begotten the child upon its natural mother, therefore it is necessary that she should be a person who might lawfully have been his wife. There is no fiction that the natural father had also begotten the child upon the adopting mother. The natural son becomes the son, not merely of the particular wife from whom he is born, but of all the wives; and the authors of the Dattaka *Mimâṃsâ* and Dattaka *Chandrikâ* seem to think that the same result follows in the case of several wives from an adoption (*l*). The fiction can hardly extend to the length of his being conceived by all. In fact it would appear that the Hindu law takes no notice of the wife in reference to adoption. The relation of the adopted son to her arises upon adoption. But the balance of authority and reasoning appears to be opposed to the idea that relationship to her has any effect upon the choice of the boy to be adopted.

§ 121. The adopted son must be of the same class as his adopting father; that is, a Brâhman may not adopt a Kshatriya, or *vice versâ*. This rule is probably an innovation upon ancient usage, as Medhâtithi and others interpret the words of Manu "being alike" (translated by Sir W. Jones "being of the same class") as meaning merely, possessing suitable qualities, though of a different class (*m*). In the time of Manu a man might have married wives of different class, and the sons of all such wives would have been legitimate, and would have inherited together, though in different proportions (*n*). Each of such sons must have been competent to perform his father's obsequies, though perhaps with varying merit. It would have been remarkable, therefore, if a man could not have adopted the son of a woman whom he might have married. Baudhâyana makes no reference to caste, and Vâsishta merely says, "the class ought to be known" (§ 94), which is natural enough, as

Identity of
caste.

(*l*) Manu, ix. § 183; Dattaka *Mimâṃsâ*, ii. § 69; Dattaka *Chandrikâ*, i. § 23. And so the pandits stated in this case, F. MacN. App 11.

(*m*) Manu, ix. § 168; Mitâksharâ, i. 11, § 9; V. May., iv. 5, § 4; Dattaka *Mimâṃsâ*, ii. § 23-25; Dattaka *Chandrikâ*, i. § 12-16.

(*n*) Manu, ix. § 148-156.

determining a preference. The other authors (Kātyāyana, Çaunaka, Yājñavalkya, and Yaska) who forbid the adoption of one of unequal class, admit that such adoptions do take place, and are effectual as prolonging the line, though not for purposes of oblations. They therefore declare that a son so adopted is entitled to receive maintenance (*o*). From this, I presume, they considered that he was effectually severed from his natural family. It is probable, therefore, that as long as mixed marriages were lawful, the adoption of sons of inferior caste was also lawful (*p*). When the former ceased, the latter also ceased. At present, I imagine that the adoption of a Kshatriya by a Brâhman would be a mere nullity, and would neither take the boy out of his natural family, nor give him any claim upon the family of the adopter. The case has never occurred, and is quite certain never to occur.

Personal dis-
qualification.

§ 122. As the chief reason for adoption is the performance of funeral ceremonies, it follows that one who from any personal disqualification would be incapable of performing them, would be an unfit person to be adopted (*q*). Nothing is said upon the point by Hindu law writers. Probably the idea that such an adoption could be made would never have occurred to their minds. As a person so adopted would also be incapable of succeeding to the property of the adopter, and so continuing his name and lineage, every object would fail which an adoption is intended to serve.

Limitation from
age.

§ 123. A further limitation upon the selection of a son for adoption arises from age, and the previous performance of ceremonies in the natural family (*r*). The leading authority

(*o*) See too D. K. S. vii. § 23, 24, citing Nārada.

(*p*) In Northern Ceylon this is the case still. The son, if adopted by a man, passes into his caste. If adopted by a woman, he remains in the caste of his natural father. Thesawaleme, ii. § 7.

(*q*) Suth. Syn. 665; V. Darp. 828, 830.

(*r*) As to the eight ceremonies for a male, see Colebrooke, note to Dattaka Mimāṃsā. iv. § 23; 3 Dig. 104. Of these, tonsure is the fifth, and *upanayana*, or investiture with the sacred thread, is the eighth. The former is performed in the second or third year after birth, the latter, in the case of Brâhmins, in the eighth year from conception. But it may be performed so early as the fifth, or delayed till the sixteenth year. The primary periods for *upanayana* in the case of a Kshatriya are eleven, and of a Vaiçya twelve years, but it may be delayed till the ages of twenty-two and twenty-four respectively. For Çûdras there is no ceremony but marriage.

upon this point is a passage from the Kalika-purâṇa, which is relied on by Nanda Paṇḍita, but which is treated as spurious by Devaṇḍa Bhaṭṭa, Nīlakaṇṭha, and others, and which is admittedly wanting in many copies of that work. It lays down absolutely that a child must not be adopted whose age exceeds five years, or upon whom the ceremony of tonsure has been performed in the natural family (*s*). The result of a lengthened commentary on this passage in the Dattaka Mimâṃsâ appears to be; first, that the limit of age as not exceeding five is absolute. Secondly, that one who has had the tonsure performed ought not to be adopted, as he will at the outside be the son of two fathers. But, thirdly, that if no other is procurable, a boy on whom tonsure has been performed may be received. In that case, however, the previous rites must be annulled by the performance of the *putreshtī*, or sacrifice for male issue. As regards other rites, those previous to tonsure are immaterial, the performance of the *upanayana* is an absolute bar (*t*).

Dattaka
Mimâṃsâ.

Jagannâtha appears to accept the text as literally binding, and not to recognize the right of performing the tonsure over again. He therefore considers an adoption to be invalid, if it is made after tonsure, or after the fifth year (*u*).

On the other hand, the author of the Dattaka Chandrikâ refuses to accept the text of the Kalika-purâṇa as authentic. But even if it should be genuine, he explains it away by the possibility of performing tonsure a second time in the adoptive family. The result he arrives at is, that age is only material as determining the term at which *upanayana* may be performed. So long as this rite in the case of the three higher classes, and marriage in the case of Çûdras, can be performed in the family of the adopter, there is no limit of any particular time (*x*).

Dattaka Chan-
drikâ.

Mr. W. MacNaghten is of opinion that the rules laid down by the Dattaka Mimâṃsâ and the Dattaka Chandrikâ should be followed in the Provinces in which they are respectively

(*s*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, iv. § 22; Dattaka Chandrikâ, ii, § 25; V. May., iv, 5, § 20; Mitāksharâ, i. 11, § 13, note.

(*t*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, 30—56; 1 W. MacN. 72.

(*u*) 3 Dig. 148, 249—251, 263. See too F. MacN. 139—146, 194.

(*x*) Dattaka Chandrikâ, ii. § 20—33; 1 W. MacN. 72.

in force; that is, the Dattaka Mimâmsâ in Benares, and the Dattaka Chandrikâ in Bengal and Southern India (y).

Benares.

§ 124. The only decision under Benares law of which I am aware is one of the Agra Court, where it appears to have been held that an adoption must be made when the boy was under the age of six (z). In Bengal and Southern India the decisions are in favour of the view laid down by the Dattaka Chandrikâ.

Bengal.

In some of the earlier Bengal cases, the pandits, while agreeing that the age of five years was not an absolute limit which could not be exceeded, seem to have thought that if tonsure had already been performed in the natural family, and in the name of the natural father, a subsequent adoption would be invalid (a). In 1838, however, the Sudder Court Pandit, in reply to a question as to age, answered "that the period fixed for adoption with respect to the three superior tribes, Brâhmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaiçyas, was prior to their investiture with their respective cords; and with respect to Çûdras, prior to their contracting marriage" (b). This opinion has been affirmed in several subsequent cases, and may now be treated as beyond doubt (c). The same rule has been repeatedly laid down in Madras, both by the Pandits and the Court (d). It is also suggested by Mr. Ellis, that even after *upanayana* an adoption would be valid, if the person adopted was of the same *gotra* as his adopter. He bases this view on the ground, that where the *gotra* is different, the *upanayana* is a bar, since by it the person is definitely settled in his natural family, and this renders the performance of the *datta homam* (§ 136) impossible. But where the *gotra* is the same, the performance of the *datta homam*, though proper, is not necessary for an adoption. And this view was adopted

Madras.

(y) 1 W. MacN. 73.

(z) *Thakoor Oomrao Singh v. Thakooranee Mahtab Koonwar*, 2 Agra Rep. 103. I only know the case as cited in Cowell's Digest (1870), 336.

(a) *Kerutnaraen v. Mt. Bhobinesaree*, 1 S. D. 161 (213) (as to the remark appended to this decision see 1 W. MacN. 75); 2 W. MacN. 180; *Mt. Dullabh De v. Manu Bibi*, 5 S. D. 50 (61).

(b) *Bullabakant v. Kishenprea*, 6 S. D. 219 (270).

(c) *Nitradayee v. Bholanath*, S. D. of 1853, 553; *Ramkishore v. Bhoobun Moyee*, S. D. of 1859, 229, 236; affirmed on review, S. D. of 1860, i. 485, 490; reversed on a different point in the P. C., where, however, the ruling as to the validity of the adoption on the ground of age was not disputed, 10 M. I. A. 279.

(d) 1 Stra. H. L. 87, 91; 2 Stra. H. L. 87, 110; 1 Mad. Dec. 106; affirmed by P. C., 1 Mad. Dec. 406; Mad. Dec. of 1859, 118; *Veerapermall v. Narrain Pillay*, 1 N. C. 133.

by the Travancore Court in a case between Brâhmans. There the *upanayana* had been performed previous to adoption. But the Court held the objection to be immaterial, since the person adopted was the son of the adopter's brother (e). The usage in Pondicherry admits of adoption after the *upanayana* in any case (f).

§ 125. This restriction again does not exist where the Brâhmanical fiction of an altered paternity is unknown. In the Punjâb there is no restriction of age (g). Among the Jains the period extends to 32, and it is said by Holloway, J., that there is no limit of age (h). So in Western India, the author of the *Mayûkha* says, "And my father has said that a married man, who has even had a son born, may become an adopted son" (i). In accordance with this *dictum* the pandits of the Surat Sudder Court reported that "the rule that a boy should be adopted under five years related to cases where no relationship exists; but when a relation is to be adopted, no obstacle exists on account of his being of mature age, married and having a family, provided he possesses common ability, and is beloved by the person who adopts him" (k). So Mr. Steele states, "the Poona *Çastris* do not recognize the necessity that adoption should precede *moonj* and marriage." And he gives various statements as to the proper age for adoption ranging from five to fifty, and ending, "there is no limit as to age. The adoptee should not be older than the adopter" (l). None of these authorities make any distinction as to the caste of the person adopted. In the Surat case the parties appear to have been Brâhmans or at least Kshatriyas. In all the cases in which the adoption of a married man has been held valid by the Bombay High Court, the parties happened to be Çûdras, but the decision did not turn upon that circumstance (m). In one case of

Limit of age not universal.

(e) 2 Stra. H. L. 104; *Ramasawmy Iyen v. Bhagati*, 8 Mad. Jur. 58; but see *Venkatasaaya v. Venkata Charlu*, 3 Mad. H. C. 28, *contra*.

(f) 1 Gibelin, 94.

(g) Punjâb Cust. 82.

(h) *Govindnath v. Gulalchund*, 5 S. D. 276 (322); *Rithcurn v. Soojun Mull*, 9 Mad. Jur. 21, cited 6 N. W. P. H. C. 402.

(i) V. May., iv. 5, § 19. His father was Shanker Bhatt, author of the *Dvait Nirṇaya*, a work of special authority in the Deccan. 8 Bomb. A. C. 70.

(k) 1 Bor. 195.

(l) Steele, 44, 182; 1 W. MacN. 75. This was also the case in Rome.

(m) *Raje Nimbalkar v. Jagavantrav*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 191; *Nathaji v. Hari Jogaji*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 67.

Brāhmans, where both *upanayana* and marriage had been performed in the natural family, the Court treated the point as undecided, and no decision was given (*n*).

Only son.

§ 126. The prohibition against adopting an only son rests on the texts of Vāsishṭa and Baudhāyana (§ 94). "Let no man give or accept an only son, since he must remain for the obsequies of his ancestor" (*o*). Now this may be a very good reason against giving away an only son, but it is obviously no reason, except on benevolent grounds, for not accepting one; unless it can be contended that an only son has exhausted his spiritual efficacy by rescuing his natural father from Put, and therefore can do nothing for his adoptive father. This is evidently not Vāsishṭa's view, as he puts the prohibition entirely upon the injury done to the father who parts with his only son. So Çaunaka says, "By no man having an only son is the gift of a son to be ever made." From which Nanda Paṇḍita infers a prohibition against accepting also, and says that the offence of extinction of lineage, denounced by Vāsishṭa, is incurred by both giver and receiver (*p*). This prohibition is by some authorities extended to the adoption of an eldest son, since his merits are specially appropriated in the interests of his own father (*q*). And even to the adoption of one of two sons, since such an act would leave the father with an only son, and thereby subject him to the chance of being left wholly without issue. But this final precept is admittedly only dissuasive and not peremptory (*r*). And the same decision has lately been given as regards the adoption of an eldest son (*s*).

Eldest son.

Son of two fathers.

§ 127. It seems to be admitted everywhere that there is no objection to the adoption of an only son, when he is taken as *dvyamūshyāyana*, or the son of two fathers; either by an

(*n*) *Sadashiv v. Hari Moneshvar*, 11 Bomb. A. C. 190.

(*o*) So in Rome, the only male of his *gens* could not be adopted, for the *sacra* would in such a case be lost.

(*p*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, iv. § 1—6; Dattaka Chandrikā, i. § 27, 28; Mitāksharā, i. 11, § 11; V. May., iv. 5, § 9, 16.

(*q*) Mitāksharā, i. 11, § 12, citing Manu, ix. § 106; 2 Stra. H. L. 105; 2 W. MacN. 182; V. May., iv. 5, § 4; *Permal Naick v. Pottee Ammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 234.

(*r*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, iv. § 8; 1 Stra. H. L. 85; 1 W. MacN. 77.

(*s*) *Janokee v. Gopaul Acharjea*, 2 Calc. 365.

express agreement that his relationship to his natural family shall continue (*t*), or by the fact that the only son of one brother is taken in adoption by another brother, in which case the double relationship appears to be established without any special contract (*u*). But whether in other cases the adoption of an only son is absolutely invalid, or is only sinful, is a point on which a great conflict of opinion exists. In Southern India, the balance of authority is in favour of the validity of the adoption. In Bengal the decisions are almost unanimously opposed to its validity. In Western India there is very little authority either way. In all the Provinces reliance is placed on the same texts, and no special usage appears to be set up as qualifying them. Whether there is any difference between the law in the different parts of India, is a matter which can now only be settled by a decision of the Privy Council. It will be sufficient for me to furnish the materials on which a decision may be given.

§ 128. The question came before Sir Thomas Strange, as Recorder of Madras in 1801, in the case of *Veerapermall v. Narrain Pillay (v)*, where the objection was taken to an adoption that the boy was an only son. There was in fact nothing in the objection, for he was the only son by a younger wife, and had an elder brother by another wife living at the time. The Recorder, after citing the text of Vâsishṭa, and the opinion of Jagannâtha (*w*) that such an adoption if made would be valid, proceeded:—

Decisions in
Madras.

“The opinion of the present pandits of Bengal is, ‘that a person who has only one son should not give him away; nor should he give away an elder son: the adoption of an only son indeed is valid, but both the giver and receiver are blameable.’ This appears to have been settled in the instance of the Râjah of Tanjore. In that important case

(*t*) 2 W. MacN. 192; 1 Stra. H. L. 86; *futwahs*, 2 Kn. 206; *Shumshere v. Dilraj Konwur*, 2 S. D. 189 (216); *Streemutty Joymonee v. Streemutty Sibosonderee*, Fulton, 75.

(*u*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, ii. 37, 38, vi. § 34—36, 47, 48; Dattaka Chandrikâ, i. § 27, 28, iii. § 17, v. § 33; 1 Stra. H. L. 86; 2 Stra. H. L. 107; Steele, 45, 183; *Permal Naick v. Pottee Ammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 234; *per curiam*, 15 B. L. R. 415; 13 M. I. A. 101; 1 Mad. H. C. 57; 5 I. A. 42; V. May., iv. 5, § 21, 22.

(*v*) 1 N. C. 91, 125.

(*w*) 3 Dig. 243.

the person adopted was the only son of his parents ; and it is a mistake if any one imagines that the deviation from the rule on that occasion was supported upon any ground of Mahratta custom or policy. The objection appears to have undergone deep consideration, conducted in part through the fortunate medium of Sir W. M. Jones ; and certainly in a way to evince the anxiety of Government to be rightly advised. It appears that the pandits of Bengal and Benares in general were of opinion that ‘ in all countries the affiliation of an only son is valid, although the parent who gives the child, and the adopter, both incur sin by deviating from the ordinances of the *Çastra*, which declare the giving or taking of an only son in adoption to be improper.’ Râmavana indeed, and the other pandits who sign with him, state ‘ that an only son could not be given to the Râjah to adopt as his son.’ But it appears that they rather mean that the act could not be done consistently with the ordinances of the *Çastra*, than that the adoption was invalid, for they expressly state that ‘ several usages had been adopted and followed, that are not found in the *Çastra*, and are to be looked upon as valid.’ This exposition was considered at the time as reconciling their opinion with that of Kasheenauth and the other Benares pandits, who stated ‘ that the adoption of an only son is one of those acts which is tolerated by usage, although it incurs guilt according to the *Çastra*.’ These testimonies corroborating the opinions of the Tanjore pandits, transmitted by the widow of the Râjah Tulsajee, and those received through the Government of Fort St. George, decided the Supreme Government that the objection that Serfojee was an only son was not sufficiently founded to invalidate his adoption and succession.”

Only son may be adopted.

European opinions.

§ 129. In the second volume of Sir Thomas Strange’s he gives the opinions of pandits declaring that neither an only nor an elder son can be adopted. These are accompanied by remarks of Mr. Colebrooke, who says that a valid adoption of an only son cannot be made, except in the case of a brother’s son, who performs the offices of a son to both natural and adoptive father, the absolute gift being forbidden ; and of Mr. Ellis, who says that if the act be duly completed it

cannot be reversed (x). In the text he reiterates the opinion, already expressed from the Bench, that the prohibitions respecting an eldest and only son are only directory, and an adoption of either, however blameable in the giver, would nevertheless for every legal purpose be good (y).

§ 130. In a Madras case in 1817 the question was whether a man was bound to adopt the son of his elder brother, being an only son, in preference to the son of his uncle. The pandits answered: "It is not lawful for a man to give his only son in adoption to another. It is not lawful for a man to receive in adoption the only son of another, therefore it is not lawful, and consequently not incumbent, on a man to adopt the only son of his elder brother in preference to the youngest son of his uncle. But if such an adoption as aforesaid should take place, although the giver and receiver in adoption have thereby committed sin, the adoption is valid" (z). Here the pandits seem to have overlooked the distinction between the only son of a brother and of a stranger. In other respects they agree with Sir T. Strange.

Pandits.

Madras
decisions.

In 1851 a case came before the Sudr Udalut in which an uncle had adopted the eldest son of his brother. The pandits, after having referred to an opinion they had given in 1848 declaring the adoption of an eldest son to be invalid, repeated their opinion that as a general rule it would be so, but not in this case where the person adopted was a brother's son. The Court citing this opinion and also the opinion of Sir Thos. Strange, say, "In the present instance the adoption was by a paternal uncle, and having thus taken place, though a thing to have been avoided, it must be held to be valid" (a).

Eldest son.

In 1854 the same question as to an eldest son arose, but in this case without the circumstance of his being a brother's son. The Sudder pandits again pronounced the adoption invalid, and on the strength of their opinion the Civil Judge rejected his claim. The Sudder Court reversed the decision, solely on the ground that the adoption had been made good

(x) 2 Stra. H. L. 87, 106, 107. Proceedings of the Sudr Udalut of Madras to the same effect appear to have been passed in 1824 and 1825. See Stra. Man. § 99.

(y) 1 Stra. H. L. 87.

(z) 1 Mad. Dec. 154.

(a) *Permal Naik v. Pottee Ammall*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, p. 234.

by acquiescence and lapse of time. They did not notice the finding as to invalidity in law (b).

The case came on for a direct decision in the Madras High Court in 1862, and it was decided, on a review of the previous cases, that the adoption of an only son was valid (c). A similar conclusion has lately been arrived at by the majority of the Judges of the High Court of Allahabad, Turner, J., dissenting (d).

Bombay.

§ 131. In Bombay it is stated by Mr. Steele that an only son should not be given in adoption, except to his uncle, or with the concurrence of both parties, by which I suppose he means as a *dvyaṃśhyāyana* (e). But in a case where a man who had only two sons gave them both away in adoption, the pandits said the adoptions were valid, as the sin lies with the giver and not the receiver (f). And in 1867 the High Court expressly decided that the adoption of an only son was valid, if accomplished, though improper (g). On the other hand in a later case the High Court spoke of "the general rule of Hindu law that an only son cannot be the subject of adoption, a rule recently re-affirmed and illustrated by a judgment of the Calcutta High Court" (h). The remark of course was merely *obiter dictum*. In 1877 the objection that the boy adopted was an only son was taken in the High Court, but abandoned as untenable (i). This seems to show that the Bombay and Madras Courts now agree upon this point.

Bengal :
only son may
not be adopted.

✓
§ 132. In Bengal, on the other hand, the authorities are nearly all opposed to the validity of the adoption of an only son. Sir F. MacNaghten and Mr. Sutherland both declare unhesitatingly against it (j), and the younger MacNaghten cites numerous *futwāhs* in accordance with that view, the only exception being where the adoption was of the *dvyaṃśhyāyana* character (k). The decisions are to the same effect.

(b) *Chocummal v. Surathy Amay*, Mad. Dec. of 1854, p. 31.

(c) *Chinna Gounden v. Kumara Gounden*, 1 Mad. H. C. 54.

(d) *Hanuman Tiwari v. Chirai*, 2 All. 164.

(e) Steele, 45, 183.

(f) *Huebut Rao v. Govindrao*, 2 Bor. 75, 86.

(g) *Raje Nimbalkar v. Jayavantrav*, 4 Bomb. A. C., 191.

(h) 6 Bomb. O. C. 4.

(i) *Rangubai v. Bhaghirtibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R., at p. 379.

(j) F. MacN. 123, 147, 150; Suth. Syn. 665.

(k) 2 W. MacN. 178, 179, 192, 195.

§ 133. In the case of *Shumshere Mull v. Dilras Konwur* (l), the plaintiff rested his case on an adoption which was void as being made by a widow without her husband's authority. The Sudder Court, however, with reference to the claims of other parties, one of whom, named Tej Mull, was an only son who had been taken in adoption, asked the pandits whether such an adoption was valid. They replied that the validity of the adoption of Tej Mull, and his right to the estate, depended upon whether he had been delivered to and accepted by the adopting parent on the condition that he should belong as a son to both. If not so delivered, the adoption would be illegal and carry with it no title to the estate. No decision upon the point was required or given. In a later case the plaintiff, who was an only son, claimed as adopted. His adoption was declared illegal on this ground, and his suit was dismissed. This decision was confirmed on review. After the case had been submitted to a new pandit, he gave an equally unqualified opinion with his predecessor. One of the judges thought that the adoption though improper was not invalid, but two other judges disagreed with him, and the former decision was confirmed (m). The same decision was given in another case, where the defendant in possession was an only son, whose title rested on the validity of his adoption. The pandits pronounced "That the fact of his being an only son was sufficient to invalidate the adoption, as such a person was forbidden to be adopted; and the violation of this law was a criminal act on the part of both giver and receiver." It was then alleged that he had been given as *dvyamūshyāyana*. But it appeared that he had been given by his mother after his father's death, and the pandits said that a widow could not give away her son in this manner without express authority from her husband, which she had not received. He was therefore turned out of possession by the Court (n). On the other hand, in a case in the Bengal Supreme Court, the Court said: "The

Bengal :
decisions as to
only son.

(l) 2 S. D. 189 (216).

(m) *Nundram v. Kashe Pande*, 3 S. D. 232 (310); 4 S. D. 70 (89). This case is erroneously cited by Scotland, C.J., as an authority the other way in 1 Mad. H. C. 57.

(n) *Debee Dial v. Hur Hor Singh*, 4 S. D. 320 (407).

adoption of an only son is no doubt blameable by Hindu law, but when done it is valid." They went on however to say that rather than treat it as invalid they would assume an agreement between the natural and adoptive father that the boy was to be the son of both, which of course got over the difficulty (o). Finally the point came before the Bengal High Court in 1868, when the title of the plaintiff rested on the validity of his adoption, he being an only son. The Madras case and others were cited, but it was held by the Court that the adoption was absolutely invalid. Mitter, J. said, "One of the essential requisites of a valid adoption is that the gift should be made by a competent person, and the Hindu law distinctly says that the father of an only son has no such absolute dominion over that son as to make him the subject of a sale or gift (D. M. iv. 5). Such a gift, therefore, would be as much invalid as a gift made by the mother of a child, without the consent of the father. It is to be borne in mind that the prohibition in question is applicable to the giver as well as to the receiver, and both parties are threatened with the offence of 'extinction of lineage' in case of violation. Now the perpetuation of lineage is the chief object of adoption under the Hindu law, and if the adoptive father incurs the offence of 'extinction of lineage,' by adopting a child who is the only son of his father, the object of the adoption necessarily fails" (p). In 1878 the whole subject was again elaborately discussed by the High Court of Bengal, and it was decided that according to the law of that province the adoption of an only son was illegal, and that the prohibition applied to Cûdras as well as to the higher classes (q). It may therefore be taken that on this point the law of Bengal differs from that of Madras and Bombay.

§ 134. Two persons cannot adopt the same boy, even if

Two persons
cannot adopt
same boy.

(o) *Streemutty Joymonee v. Streemutty Sibosoondery Dossee*, Fulton, 75. In one case in Bengal an adoption was held valid where it was admitted that the boy at the time of his adoption was an only son, his elder brother having predeceased. No discussion on the point is recorded in the report. *Mt. Dullabh De v. Manu Bibi*, 5 S. D. 50 (61).

(p) *Upendra Lal v. Strimati Rani*, 1 B. L. R. A. C. 221; approved, *Janokee v. Gopaul*, 2 Calc. 365, and by Bombay H. Ct., 6 Bomb. O. C. 4. See *obiter dictum* of Jud. Committee, 13 M. I. A. 100.

(q) *Manick Chunder Dutt v. Bhuggobutty Dossee*, 3 Calc. 443.

the persons adopting are brothers. It is, however, suggested by the author of the *Dattaka Mimāṃsā* that two brothers may jointly adopt the son of a third brother, so that he may be the *dvyamūshyāyana*, or son of both. Mr. W. MacNaghten expresses a strong opinion against the legality of such a proceeding (r).

§ 135. FOURTH, THE CEREMONIES NECESSARY TO AN ADOPTION are stated by *Vāsishta* as follows: "A person being about to adopt a son, should take an unremote kinsman, or the near relation of a kinsman, having convened his kindred, and announced his intention to the king, and having offered a burnt offering, with recitation of the holy words in the middle of his dwelling" (s). A fuller ritual, which however is merely an enlargement of the above, is given by *Çaunaka* and *Baudhāyana*, in passages which are referred to by writers as the leading authorities upon the subject (t). In these much stress is laid upon the giving and receiving of the boy. Upon this *Baudhāyana* says, "Then having performed the ceremonies beginning with drawing the lines on the altar, and ending with the placing of the water vessels, he should go to the giver of the child, and ask him, saying, Give me thy son. The other answers, I give him. He receives him with these words, I take thee for the fulfilment of my religious duties. I take thee to continue the line of my ancestors" (u). "The expression 'king' in these texts has been explained by commentators to signify the chief of the town or village. They seem however agreed that the notice enjoined, and the invitation of kinsmen are no legal essentials to the validity of the adoption, being merely intended to give greater publicity to the act, and to obviate litigation and doubt regarding the succession" (v).

Ritual.

Notice to officials.

§ 136. The giving and receiving are absolutely necessary ; they are the operative part of the ceremony, being that part

Giving and receiving.

(r) *Dattaka Mimāṃsā*, i. § 30, ii. § 40—47 ; 1 W. MacN. 77.

(s) *Mitāksharā*, i. 11, § 13.

(t) *V. May.*, iv. 5, § 8, 36—42 ; *Dattaka Mimāṃsā*, v. § 2, 42 ; *Dattaka Chandrikā*, ii. See too 2 *Str. H. L.* 218 ; *Steele*, 45.

(u) *Baudhāyana*, ii. § 7—9 ; *Journ. As. Soc. Bengal*, 1866, art. *Çaunaka Smṛiti*.

(v) *Suth. Syn.* 667, 675 ; 1 *N. C.* 117 ; as to assent of Government, *ante*, 117.

Datta Homam.

of it which transfers the boy from one family into another. According to some authorities nothing else is so essential, that the want of it will absolutely invalidate an adoption. Even the *datta homam* or oblation to fire, though a most important part of the rite in the case of the three higher classes, has been held to be a mere matter of unessential ceremonial (*w*). On this point however there is a conflict of authority. The Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, after reciting the ritual prescribed by Vâsishṭa and Çaunaka, both of which include the oblation to fire, says, "Therefore the filial relation of these five sons proceeds from adoption only with observance of the forms of either Vâsishṭa or Çaunaka; not otherwise" (*x*). And he winds up the chapter on the mode of adoption by saying, "It is therefore established that the filial relation of adopted sons is occasioned only by the (proper) ceremonies. Of gift, acceptance, a burnt sacrament, and so forth, should either be wanting, the filial relation even fails" (*y*). So the Dattaka Chandrikâ, after giving the ritual of Baudhâyana for the followers of the Taittiri Veda, which also includes the *datta homam*, says, "In case no form, as propounded, should be observed, it will be declared that the adopted son is entitled to assets sufficient for his marriage" (*z*). A Madras Pandit says, *datta homam* is essential to Brâhmans but not to the other classes, and his opinion is stated to be correct by Mr. Colebrooke and Mr. Ellis (*a*). So Mr. Steele says, "Çûdras cannot perform any ceremonies requiring *Mantras* from the Vedas" (*b*). Judging from these passages it would certainly seem that the sacrifice to fire was essential to those classes for whom it was prescribed, and probable that it was not prescribed for the Çûdras.

No religious
ceremonies for
Çûdras.

§ 137. After a good deal of conflict of decisions, it appears to be now settled that for Çûdras at all events no religious ceremony is necessary; whether this applies to the superior

(*w*) *Veera-permall v. Narrain Pillay*, 1 N. C. 91, 117; 1 Stra. H. L. 95; 3 Dig. 244, 248; *V. Singamma v. Venkatacharlu*, 4 M. H. C. 165; *per cur.* 2 Kn. 290; 2 W. Mac.N. 199; 1 Gib. 93.

(*x*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. 50.

(*y*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. 56.

(*z*) Dattaka Chandrikâ, ii. 16, 17, vi. 3; 2 W. Mac.N. 198.

(*a*) 2 Stra. H. L. 87—89.

(*b*) Steele, 46.

classes seems to be still unsettled. In 1834 the Judicial Committee said, "Although neither written acknowledgments, nor the performance of any religious ceremonials, are essential to the validity of adoptions, such acknowledgments are usually given, and such ceremonies observed, and notices given of the times when adoptions are to take place, in all families of distinction, as those of Zemindars or opulent Brâhmans; so that wherever these have been omitted, it behoves the Court to regard with extreme suspicion the proof offered in support of an adoption" (c). It appears from the report of the case in Bengal that the parties were Brâhmans. It was admitted that no religious ceremonies were performed. But both in the Sudder Court and in the Privy Council their absence was treated as merely a matter of evidence, and not as in itself invalidating the adoption. As a matter of fact both Courts found that the adoption had not taken place. In a much later case before the Privy Council, where a Çûdra adoption was concerned, the High Court of Bengal had treated it as an open question whether or not a Çûdra could be adopted without the performance of religious ceremonies, viz., the offering of burnt sacrifice and the like. On appeal the Judicial Committee said, "In the case of *Streemutty Joymonnee v. Streemutty Sibosoonderee* (Fult. 75), it was held by the Supreme Court in Calcutta that amongst Çûdras no religious ceremony, except in the case of marriage, is necessary" (d). In the view taken of the case by their Lordships the point did not arise, and was not decided. The next time the point arose in Bengal between Çûdras the High Court decided, on the authority of a passage in the *Dattaka Nirṇaya*, cited in the *Vayavastha Darpana*, that the performance of the *datta homam* was essential to an adoption even amongst Çûdras, and as no such ceremony had been performed in the particular case, held the adoption invalid (e). In a later case, however, which was also between Çûdras, the Court

Case of Çûdras.

(c) *Sootrogun Sutputty v. Sabitra Dhye*, 2 Kn. 287, 290; 2 S. D. 21 (26).

(d) *Streenarrain Narrain Mitter v. Srimati Krishna*, 2 B. L. R. A. C. 279; 11 B. L. R. P. C. 171, 187.

(e) *Bhairabnath v. Maheschandra*, 4 B. L. R. A. C. 162; cited and approved, 5 B. L. R. A. C. 366.

professed to treat this decision as having gone upon the special facts, which it certainly had not done; and drew a further distinction between the two cases, on the ground that "in the present case, the adopted son is a brother's son, a member of the same family, in regard to whom the mere giving and taking may be sufficient to give validity to the adoption" (*f*). Finally the express point was referred to a Full Bench. It was then found that the passage in the *Dattaka Nirṇaya*, which had formerly been relied upon as showing that a Çûdra should adopt with the *datta homam*, proved exactly the opposite; an essential part of the passage having been omitted. The Court accordingly answered the question put by saying, "Amongst Çûdras in Bengal no ceremonies are necessary in addition to the giving and taking of the child in adoption" (*g*).

Case of superior
classes.

§ 138. Whether the same rule holds good in the three superior classes is of course a different question. In Madras it has been expressly decided that even among Brâhmanas the *datta homam* or any other religious ceremony is unnecessary (*h*). The same rule is certainly implied in the case in Knapp, cited in the last Section, though not decided, and the opinion of Jagannâtha is to the same effect (*i*). On the other hand the pandits in two Bengal cases seem to have laid down that the *datta homam* was essential in the case of an adoption among the three superior classes (*j*), and the same statement was made very recently by Mr. Justice Mitter (*k*). It seems also to have been assumed that this was the general rule in a Bombay case. There it had been omitted in the case of an adoption of a brother's son. The pandits held the adoption nevertheless valid under a special text of Yâma. "It is not

(*f*) *Nittianund v. Krishna Dyal*, 7 B. L. R. 1. As to the last point suggested, see *ante*, § 124.

(*g*) *Behari Lall v. Indramani*, 13 B. L. R. 401; *acc. Dyamoyee v. Rasbeharee*, S. D. of 1852, 1001; *Perkash Chunder v. Dhunmonnee*, S. D. of 1853, 96; *Alwar v. Ramasawmy*, 2 Mad. Dec. 67.

(*h*) *Singamma v. Venkatacharlu*, 4 Mad. H. C. 165; 1 Stra. H. L. 96; *contra*, 2 Stra. H. L. 131.

(*i*) 3 Dig. 244, 248.

(*j*) *Alank Manjari v. Fakir Chand*, 5 S. D. 356 (418); *Bullabakant v. Kishenprea*, 6 S. D. 219 (270).

(*k*) *Luchmun v. Mohun Lall*, 16 W. R. 179; see too *Thakoor Oomrao v. Thakooranee Mohtab*, 2 Agra H. C. 103 (Cow. Dig. 336).

expressly required that burnt sacrifice and other ceremonies should be performed on adopting the son of a daughter or of a brother, for it is accomplished in those cases by word of mouth alone" (l).

§ 139. In any case it is quite clear that if the omission of the ceremonies has been intentional, with a view to leaving the adoption unfinished; or if from death or any other cause a ceremony which had been intended has not been carried out, no change of condition will take place, even though the ceremonies which have been omitted might lawfully have been left out. Because the mutual assent, which is necessary to a valid and completed adoption, has never taken place (m). And even in cases where giving and receiving are sufficient, there must be an actual giving and receiving. A mere symbolical transfer by the exchange of deeds would not be sufficient (n).

Intentional omission.

In the Punjâb no ceremonial whatever is required, the transaction being purely a matter of civil contract (o). Among the Moodeliars of Northern Ceylon the only ceremonial appears to be the drinking of saffron water by the adopting person (p).

Punjâb.

Ceylon.

§ 140. FIFTH, THE EVIDENCE OF AN ADOPTION.—There is no particular evidence required to prove an adoption. Those who rely on it must establish it like any other fact, whether they are plaintiffs or defendants (q). In one respect they are in a favourable position; that is in consequence of the peculiar religious views of Hindus. The probability is that a sonless Hindu will contemplate adoption; and this probability is increased if he is advanced in years or sickly, if he has property to leave behind, as regards which he would naturally wish for a lineal successor, and still more if from family dissensions, the person who would otherwise be his successor is a person whom he would not be likely to desire.

Presumption as to adoption.

(l) *Huebut Rao v. Govindrao*, 2 Bor. 75, 87; Steele, 45.

(m) 2 W. MacN. 197; *Isserchunder v. Rasbeharee*, S. D. of 1852, 1001; *Bance Pershad v. Moonshee Syed*, 25 W. R. 192.

(n) *Sreenarrain Mitter v. Srimati Krishna*, 2 B. L. R. A. C. 279.

(o) Punjâb Customs, 82.

(p) *Thesawaleme*, ii.

(q) *Tarini Charan v. Saroda Sundari*, 3 B. L. R. A. C. 146; *Hur Dyal Nag v. Roy Krishto*, 24 W. R. 107.

In countries governed by the Mitāksharā law the further circumstance would arise that his widow, supposing him to leave one, would be dependent for her maintenance on a collateral, perhaps a distant member of the family. If, therefore, he was on affectionate terms with her, he would naturally wish to leave her in the more advantageous position of mother and guardian of an adopted son (*r*). Similarly an opposite state of things, such as the youth of the adopting father, the probability of his having issue by his wife, or the like, would render the fact of the adoption unlikely (*s*). No writing is necessary; though, of course, in case of a large property, or a person of high position, the absence of a writing would be a circumstance which would call for strict scrutiny and strong evidence of the actual fact (*t*). Nor is it even in all cases necessary to produce direct evidence of the fact of the adoption; where it has taken place long since, and where the adopted son has been treated as such by the members of the family and in public transactions, every presumption will be made that every circumstance has taken place which is necessary to account for such a state of things as is proved or admitted to exist (*u*).

Writing.

Effect of res
judicata.

§ 141. It has been held that a decision in favour of an adoption, in a suit in which it was in dispute, is *primâ facie* evidence of the fact of the adoption, even as against persons who were no parties to the suit (*v*). It has even been held that a valid regular judgment of a competent Court upon the status of an alleged adopted son is a judgment *in rem*, which is binding and conclusive as against the whole world, unless fraud or collusion can be made out; and that a summary

(*r*) 1 Hyde, 249; *Huradun v. Muthoranath Mookurjea*, 4 M. I. A. 414, when the P. C. reversed concurrent decisions of the Lower Courts, finding against the adoption; 7 M. I. A. 64; *Stri Ragonada v. Sri Broso Kishoro*, 3 I. A. 177. See as to force of presumption in favour of adoption, *per Mitter, J.*, 15 W. R. 548.

(*s*) *Mt. Sabitrea v. Sutroghun Sutputtee*, 2 S. D. 21 (26); affirmed, 2 Kn. 287.

(*t*) 2 Kn. 290; *Ondykadran v. Aroonachela*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, p. 53.

(*u*) *Perkash Chunder v. Dhunmonnee*, S. D. of 1853, 96; *Nittianand v. Krishna Dhyal*, 7 B. L. R. 1; *Rajendro Nath v. Jogendro Nath*, 14 M. I. A. 67; *Hur Dyal v. Roy Krishto*, 24 W. R. 107; *Sabo Bewa v. Nuboghun*, 11 W. R. 380.

(*v*) *Sectaram v. Juggobundo Bose*, 2 W. R. 168.

adjudication of the same nature, though not conclusive, is *primâ facie* evidence of the facts adjudicated upon, sufficient to throw the burthen of disproving the same upon the opposite party (x). But this doctrine is now over-ruled. The binding character of judgments of the Courts of India upon questions of personal status was exhaustively examined by Mr. Justice Holloway in a Madras case, where a decree upon a question of division was relied upon as a judgment *in rem* (y), and later in a Bengal case, where the point decided in 3 W. R. 14, was referred to a Full Bench. It had been held upon the authority of that decision, that where a reversioner had brought a suit against a widow as heiress, to set aside alienations by her, and to establish his title as reversioner, and the Court had found that her husband had been adopted, and therefore that the plaintiff was next heir, that this finding was conclusive against a person who was no party to that suit, and who denied the adoption. Peacock, C. J., after referring to Mr. Justice Holloway's judgment, said, "I concur with him entirely in the conclusion at which he arrived; viz., that a decision by a competent Court that a Hindu family was joint and undivided, or upon a question of legitimacy, adoption, partibility of property, rule of descent in a particular family, or upon any other question of the same nature in a suit *inter partes*, or, more properly speaking, in an action *in personam*, is not a judgment *in rem* or binding upon strangers, or, in other words, upon persons who were neither parties to the suit nor privies. I would go further, and say that a decree in such a case is not, and ought not to be admissible at all as evidence against strangers" (z).

Not a judgment
in rem.

But though the decree itself might neither be conclusive nor admissible as evidence, the proceeding in which the decree took place might be very important. For instance, when the fact of any adoption at all having taken place

Important as
evidence.

(x) *Kistomonee Debea v. Coll. of Moorshedabad*, S. D. of 1859, 550; *Rajkristo Roy v. Kishoree Mohun*, 3 W. R. 14.

(y) *Yarakalamma v. Anakala*, 2 Mad. H. C. 276. See also *Gopalyn v. Raghupati Ayan*, 3 Mad. H. C. 217.

(z) *Kanhya Loll v. Radha Churn*, 7 W. R. 338; followed in *Jogendro Deb Roy v. Funindro Deb Roy*, 14 M. I. A. 367; *Katama Nachiar v. Shivagunga*, 9 M. I. A. 539; *Jumoon Dassya v. Bamasoonderai*, 3 I. A. 72, 81.

was in dispute, it would be most important to show that the alleged adopted son had put forward his title as owner of, or interested in the property, by preferring or defending suits, or proceedings in the revenue or magisterial Courts, relating to the property; just as his failing to do so would be important the other way. Again, if those who now denied his title were shown to have been cognisant of, or to have joined him in such transactions, the evidence would be still stronger in his favour.

Lapse of time

§ 142. Lapse of time may operate in two ways. First, as strengthening the probability of an adoption. Secondly, as barring any attempt to set it aside. In the first case it goes to show that the adoption was valid; in the second case, it prevents the results which would follow from holding that it was invalid.

as evidence.

First, it is evident that where a length of time has elapsed since an alleged adoption, and that adoption has been treated by the family and by the society in which the family moves, as a valid and subsisting one, this is in itself strong evidence of the opinion of those acquainted with the facts that everything had taken place necessary to a valid adoption. It is like that repute which is always so much relied on in cases of disputed marriage or legitimacy (*a*). But it is evident that the force of the testimony lies in repute prevailing through a long period of time, not upon the time itself. If, therefore, it appears that the adoption was kept a secret, or that being asserted on one side it was simply ignored on the other, and that no action was ever taken upon it, nor any course of treatment pursued in respect to the alleged adopted son, different from that which would have prevailed if no adoption had been set up, then there is no repute, and the longer the time during which such a state of things lasts, the greater is the evidence against the adoption.

Where adoption
admittedly
invalid.

Secondly, such repute can have no effect whatever when the admitted facts show that there has been no valid adoption; *e.g.*, in the case of the adoption of a sister's son by a Brâhman, or of a son by a man who had one living. But there might be facts

(a) *Rajendro Nath v. Joyendro Nath*, 14 M. L. A. 67.

or a course of dealing which, though they could not render the adoption valid, would prevent certain persons from disputing it. A bar of this sort would arise in two ways: 1, by way of estoppel; 2, by way of the Statute of Limitations.

§ 143. FIRST.—A merely passive acquiescence by one person in an infringement of his rights by another person, or in an assertion of an adverse right by another person, will not prevent the former from afterwards maintaining his own strictly legal right in a court of law, provided he does so within the period of limitation fixed by the law. The reason is that the law gives him a specified period during which he may, if he chooses, submit with impunity to an encroachment on his rights, and there is nothing inequitable in his availing himself of this period. But it is different if his acquiescence amounts to an active consent to conduct on the part of another of which he might justly complain. If by his own behaviour he encourages another to believe that he has not the right which he really possesses, or that he has waived that right; or if by representations or acts he induces another to enter upon a course which he would not otherwise have entered on, or leads him to believe that he may enter on that course with safety, then he will not afterwards be allowed to assert any rights which are inconsistent with, or infringed upon by that new state of things which he himself has been influential in bringing about. And this is equally so whether the right he is asserting is a legal or an equitable right. For it would be unjust that after he had by his own conduct induced another to alter his position, he should afterwards be allowed to complain of the very thing which he had himself brought about (*b*). This doctrine has been applied in India to cases of invalid adoption. In one, the adoption, being that of a sister's son by a Brâhman, was held to be absolutely invalid. In another, in Western India, being the case of a Brâhman adopted after upanâyana and marriage, the Court declined to decide the question of invali-

Effect of acquiescence.

(*b*) *Rama Rau v. Raja Rau*, 2 Mad. H. C. 114; *Peddammuthulaty v. N. Timma Reddy*, ib. 270; *Bajan v. Basava Chetty*, ib. 428, where the English cases are examined, and the distinction between legal and equitable rights and the mode in which they are barred, is pointed out; *Taruck Chunder v. Huro Sunkur*, 22 W. R. 267.

dity. In both cases they were of opinion that the objecting party was estopped from disputing the adoption, since he had himself not only acquiesced in it, but in one case had encouraged it and concurred in it at the time it took place; and in another had, by treating the adopted son as a member of the family, induced him to abandon the right in his natural family which he might otherwise have claimed (c). The application of this doctrine is peculiarly just in cases of adoption. Even if the invalidity of the adoption was such that the person adopted was not legally excluded from his natural family, he would necessarily be driven to legal proceedings to effect his return into it; he might be met by the Statute of Limitations, and so completely defeated, or might find that from change of circumstances his position, when restored to his natural family, was very different from what it would have been if he had never left it (d).

Statute of Limitations:

§ 144. SECONDLY.—The Statute of Limitations will also be a bar in some cases to an attempt to set aside a disputed adoption; that is it will bar a suit to recover property held under colour of an adoption. The important question here will be, from what time does the statute run? The answer will be, from the time the party seeking to set it aside is injuriously affected by it. Where a person would be entitled to immediate possession, but for the intervention of one claiming as adopted son, of course the statute must run at the very latest from the time at which the title to possession accrues, because from this time, at all events, the possession of the adopted son must be adverse. But there are cases of greater difficulty, where an adopted son is in possession, but the person whose rights would be affected by the adoption is a reversioner, who is not entitled to immediate possession. An instance of this sort is the case of an adoption by a widow who is in as heir to her husband.

time from which it runs.

§ 145. On this point there was a direct conflict of authority. In several cases previous to 1869 it was held that the statute

(c) *Gopalayan v. Raghupatiyan*, 7 Mad. H. C. 250; *Sadashiv Moreshtar v. Hari Moreshtar*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 190; *Pillari Setti v. Rama Lakshmana*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 92; *Appuaniyan v. Rama Subbaiyan*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 54.

(d) See *per cur.*, 14 M. I. A. 77.

ran from the time at which the adopted son was put in possession as such, with the cognisance of those whose rights would be affected by his adoption, and in such a public manner as to call upon them to defend their rights (e). The whole series of authorities, however, was reviewed in a case which was referred to the decision of the Full Bench of the High Court of Bengal. There the ancestor died leaving a widow, who adopted in 1824, and survived him till 1861. In 1866 the suit was commenced by the daughter's son of the ancestor, who claimed the property, alleging that the adoption was invalid. It was admitted that the adopted son and his son, the then defendant, had been in possession by virtue of the adoption since 1824. The plaintiff's suit was dismissed as barred by limitation. But this decision was reversed by the Full Bench, who held that the statute did not begin to run till the death of the widow (f). Under the present Limitation Act, XV of 1877, schedule II, § 118, a suit "to obtain a declaration that an alleged adoption is invalid, or never in fact took place" must be brought within six years from the time "when the alleged adoption becomes known to the plaintiff." But suppose the plaintiff sues, not to set aside the adoption, but simply as next heir to recover the property on the death of the widow, there seems to be no reason why he should not have twelve years from her death under §§ 140, 141, as settled by the last case.

§ 146. It may be necessary to remark that neither the law of Estoppel nor the Statute of Limitations can make a person an adopted son, if he is not one. They can secure him in the possession of certain rights, which would be his if he were adopted, by shutting the mouths of particular people, if they propose to deny his adoption; or, by stopping short any suit which might be brought to eject him from his position as adopted. But if it becomes necessary for the person who alleges himself to have been adopted, to prefer a suit to enforce rights of which he is not in possession, he would be compelled strictly to prove the validity of his

Creates rights
not status.

(e) *Bhyrub Chunder v. Kalee Kishwur*, S. D. of 1850, 369, followed in various other cases which were examined in the one next cited.

(f) *Srinath Gangopadya v. Mahes Chandra*, 4 B. L. R., F. B., 3.

adoption, as against all persons but the special individuals who were precluded from disputing it.

Results of adoption.

§ 147. SIXTH.—THE RESULT OF ADOPTION may be stated generally to be, that it transfers the adopted son out of his natural family into the adopting family, so far as regards all rights of inheritance, and the duties and obligations connected therewith. But it does not obliterate the tie of blood, or the disabilities arising from it. Therefore an adopted son is just as much incapacitated from marrying in his natural family as if he had never left it. Nor can he himself adopt a person out of his natural family, whom he could not have adopted if he had remained in it.

Questions of inheritance arise, first where there is only an adopted son. Secondly, where there is also legitimate issue of the adoptive father. Under the first head, succession is either to the paternal line, lineally or collaterally, or to the maternal line.

Lineal succession.

§ 148. Where there is only an adopted son, properly constituted, he is beyond all doubt entitled to inherit to his adoptive father, and to the father and grandfather of such adoptive father, just as if he was his natural-born son (*g*). But there has been considerable discussion as to whether he was entitled to inherit to collaterals. A reference to the table of sonship (*h*) will show that eight of the fourteen authorities referred to place the adopted son beyond the sixth in number. Now all of these say that the first six sons inherit to the father, and to collaterals, the last six only to the father. From this it is argued by those who rely on the eight, that he only succeeds lineally; by those who rely on the remaining six, that he inherits collaterally also. The real fact of course is that the two sets of authorities represent different historical periods of the law of adoption; the former relating to a period when the adopted son had not obtained the full rights which he was recognized as possess-

Collateral succession.

(*g*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, vi. § 3, 8; Dattaka Chandrikā, v. § 25, iii. § 20; *Gourbullub v. Juggenoth Pershad*, F. MacN. 159. Sir F. MacNaghten was of opinion that an adopted son in Bengal was even in a better position than a natural-born son, as having an indefeasible right to his father's estate, which a natural-born son would not have. F. MacN. 157, 228. *Sed quere?*

(*h*) *Ante*, § 65.

ing at a later period. The Dattaka Chandrikâ as usual tries to make all the passages harmonise by saying: "In the same manner the doctrine of one holy saint that the son given is an heir to kinsmen—and that of another that he is not such heir—are to be reconciled by referring to the distinction of his being endowed with good qualities or otherwise," and concludes the controversy by saying, that wherever a legitimate son would succeed to the estate of a brother or other kinsmen, the adopted son will succeed in the absence of such legitimate son (*i*). The Mitâksharâ follows Manu, who places the adopted among the first class of sons, and of course makes him a general and not merely a special heir, while he explains away the conflicting texts as being founded on the difference of good and bad qualities (*k*). The Dâya Bhâga on the other hand follows Devala, who makes the adopted son only heir to his father, and not to collaterals (*l*). Jagannâtha notices the point without deciding it, merely saying that the texts which allow of an adopted son inheriting from kinsmen must be understood "as relating to a son given, who is endowed with transcendant good qualities." As the Courts of the present day do not weigh moral differences, this must be taken as an intimation of his opinion that collateral succession does take place (*m*). This is also the opinion of Sir F. MacNaghten, of Mr. W. MacNaghten, of Sir Thos. Strange, and of Mr. Sutherland (*n*). The right has also been affirmed by express decision. In two cases the right of an adopted son to succeed to another adopted son was declared (*o*). In other cases the adopted son was held entitled to share an estate of his adoptive father's

(*i*) Dattaka Chandrikâ, v. § 22—24.

(*k*) Mitâksharâ, i. 11, § 30—34.

(*l*) Dâya Bhâga, x. § 7, 8.

(*m*) 3 Dig. 270, 272; F. MacN. 162.

(*n*) F. MacN. 128, 132; 1 W. MacN. 78; 2 W. MacN. 187; 1 Stra. H. L. 97; 2 Stra. H. L. 116; Suth. Syn. 668, 677.

(*o*) *Shamchunder v. Narayni Dibeh*, 1 S. D. 209 (279); affirmed 3 Kn. 55. (So much of this decision as allowed a second adoption to take place during the life of the first adopted son must be taken as bad. But a note states that it was considered as settling the right of an adopted son to inherit from the collaterals of his adoptive father.) *Gourhurree Kubraj v. Mt. Kutnasaree Dibia*, 6 S. D. 203 (250); *Joy Chundro v. Bhyrub Chundro*, S. D. of 1849, 461. See also the judgment of *Hobhouse, J.*, in *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lall*, 5 B. L. R., F. B., 15.

brother (*p*). While in the last case that arose, the adoptive son was held entitled to share in the property of one who was first cousin to his grandfather by adoption. And he takes exactly the same share as a legitimate son, when he is sharing with all other heirs than the legitimate son of his adoptive father (*q*). And so do his descendants, whether male or female (*r*).

Succession *ex*
parte maternâ.

§ 149. Another question as to which there is a conflict of opinion, which has not yet been authoritatively settled, is as to the right of an adopted son to succeed to the family of his adoptive father's wife or wives. *Primâ facie* one would imagine that he must necessarily do so. The theory of adoption is that it makes the son adopted to all intents and purposes the son of his father, as completely as if he had begotten him in lawful wedlock. The lawful son of a father is the son of all his wives, and would therefore, I presume, be the heir of all or any of them (*s*). And so it has been laid down that a son adopted by one wife becomes the son of all and succeeds to the property of all (*t*). The same result must follow where the son is adopted not by the wife, but by the man himself. The authors of the Dattaka Chandrikâ and Dattaka Mimâṃsâ seem to lay the point down with the most perfect clearness. The former states that "where there may be a diversity of mothers, the sires of the natural mothers are first designated by a son, who is son to two fathers, at the funeral repast in honour of the maternal grandsires; subsequently the sires of her who is the adoptive mother. But the absolutely adopted son presents oblations to the father and the other ancestors of his adoptive mother only; for he is capable of performing the funeral rites of that mother only" (*u*). And the latter says, "The forefathers of the adoptive mother only are also the maternal grandsires of sons given and the rest; for the

Native writers.

(*p*) *Lokenath Roy v. Shamasoonduree*, S. D. of 1858, 1863; *Kishenath v. Hurreegobind*, S. D. of 1859, 18; *Gooroopershad v. Rasbehary*, S. D. of 1860, i. 411.

(*q*) *Tarramohun Bhattacharjee v. Kripa Moyee Debia*, 9 W. R. 423.

(*r*) S. D. of 1858, 1863; of 1859, 18.

(*s*) *Manu*, ix. § 183; *Dattaka Mimâṃsâ*, ii. § 69; *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, i. § 23—26.

(*t*) *Teencowrie v. Dinonath*, 3 W. R. 49.

(*u*) *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, iii. § 16, 17.

rule regarding the paternal is equally applicable to the maternal grandsires of adopted sons (*v*); and in an earlier chapter (I. § 22) Nanda Paṇḍita says, "In consequence of the superiority of the husband, by his mere act of adoption, the filiation of the adopted, as son of the wife, is complete in the same manner as her property in any other thing accepted by her husband." So Mr. Sutherland states as the effect of these passages that—"He likewise represents the real legitimate son in relationship to his adoptive mother, whose ancestors are his maternal grandsires" (*x*). To the same effect is a futwah recorded by Mr. MacNaghten, where the adopted son of a sister was held to be an heir to that sister's brother, that is to say, he inherited to his adoptive mother's family (*y*). On the other hand Mr. W. MacNaghten himself decides against the right of an adopted son to succeed to property, which the wife of the adopting father had received from her relations. For this he refers to a case in Bengal, where he says the point was determined (*z*). The current of decisions upon this point is so singular that it will be necessary to refer to them in considerable detail.

Decisions.

§ 150. In *Gunga Mya's* case one of two brothers had died, leaving a widow and a daughter, but no male issue. After the death of the widow, the property got into the hands of the family of the other brother. The daughter sued to recover it. According to Bengal law her title as heir was beyond dispute. It was met by an assertion that the widow had executed a deed of gift of the property to the other brother, under the orders of her husband. The original Court found in favour of this deed of gift, and of the authority under which it was made. The plaintiff however alleged that she had received from her husband an authority to adopt, upon which she had not acted. It is difficult to see what bearing the alleged permission could have had upon the case. On appeal to the Sudder, one of the Judges called upon the pandits to state, 1st, whether the

Gunga Mya's
case.

(*v*) Dattaka Mimāṃsā, vi. § 50—52.

(*x*) Suth. Syn. 668.

(*y*) 2 W. MacN. 88.

(*z*) 1 W. MacN. 78, citing *Gunga Mya v. Kishen Kishore*, 3 S. D. 128 (170).

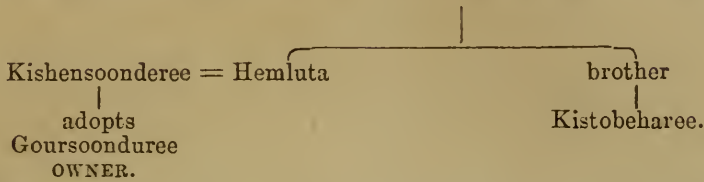
daughter or the brother of the deceased was his heir upon the death of the widow ; 2nd, if the daughter, whether her son, adopted with her husband's consent, would succeed to her father's property. The law officers necessarily answered the first question in favour of the daughter. As to the second, they said, "The son adopted by Gunga Mya by the consent of her husband has no title to the estate to which she had succeeded, because according to the *Dāya Bhāga* an adopted son has no legal claim to the property of a *Bandhu* or cognate, and according to the interpretation of the text of Manu, which admits adopted sons to the right of succession collaterally, the meaning is succession to the property of persons belonging to the same family as the adopting father, as fully appears from the *Munwastha Mooktavalee* compiled by Kallūka Bhaṭṭa and other authorities. On the death of Gunga Mya therefore the estate left by her father, to which she had succeeded on the death of her mother, and her right to which was limited to a life interest, should devolve on Kishen Kishore, the brother's son of her father (a), because when an estate devolves on a childless widow, who is held to be half the body of her husband, it reverts at her death to the heirs of her husband. So an estate which had devolved on a daughter, who has a weaker claim, should *à fortiori* revert to the heirs of her father." The upshot of the case was that the gift by the widow to the brother and the permission to make it, were both negatived by the Sudder Court. The right of the daughter was then undisputed, and the Court wisely refrained from deciding anything as to the rights of a non-existent adopted son. As a judgment, therefore, there is none whatever upon the point. There is an opinion of the pandits, resting upon a text of the *Dāya Bhāga* which denies the right of an adopted son to succeed to the collaterals of his father by adoption, and which has been repeatedly overruled (§ 148). They also refer to a gloss of Kallūka upon Manu, as to which I can say nothing.

Gungapersad's
case.

§ 151. The point never arose again till 1859, when the con-

(a) Both in the text and the citation of it in 2 W. MacN. 189, the word *husband* is substituted for father, evidently by a misprint.

verse case had to be decided. There the property claimed was



that of Goursoonduree. The plaintiff was the fourth in descent from the common ancestor, and the question was whether the property went to him, or to Kistobeharee, the brother's son of Hemluta, wife of Kishensoonduree. It was admitted that if Hemluta had been the natural mother of Goursoonduree, the proper heir would be Kistobeharee (b). But it was said that the right of the maternal relations to succeed to the property of an adopted son did not exist. For this position the case of *Gunga Mya v. Kishen Kishore* was cited. The Judges very properly held that that case was no authority as a decision, and refused to be bound by the *dictum* of the pandit. They therefore referred the case to their own pandit. He replied, "In the event of an adopted son dying without leaving any heir of the adoptive father, or of the said adopted son, the heirs of the father of the adoptive mother are under the Hindu law entitled to inherit the property of the said adopted son by right of succession." He then referred to three authorities. The only one which bore upon the point of adoption was the passage of the Dattaka Mimânsâ, above referred to (c). The case was decided in accordance with this opinion (d). It was therefore an express decision that the adoptive mother and her kindred occupied exactly the same relation, for the purpose of devolution of property, to the adopted son, as they would have occupied if he had been her natural-born son. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion, that if the property had devolved from them instead of being claimed by them, the adopted son would have been equally entitled. It seems quite clear that those Judges, at all events, would have decided in his favour. The contrary conclu-

Mother's relations are heirs of adopted son.

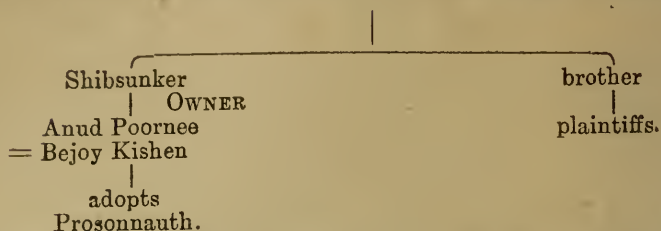
Converse denied.

(b) Kistobeharee was the son of the owner's maternal uncle. See table, post, § 429.

(c) vi. § 50.

(d) *Gungapersad v. Brijessuree Chowdrain*, S. D. of 1859, 1091.

✓ sion, however, was arrived at when the case actually arose (e).



Morun Moe
Debeah's case :

There the plaintiffs, who were nephews of Shibsunker, claimed his property. His daughter, Anud Poornee, was dead, but had left a husband and an adopted son. It was contended that he was the rightful heir. Had he been the natural-born son of Anud Poornee his claim would have been beyond dispute. But the Court held that being only an adopted son he did not inherit to the father of his adoptive mother. The two last-named cases were cited, and were admitted to be the only cases bearing upon the point. The texts of the Dattaka Mimâmsâ and Dattaka Chandrikâ establishing the relation of the male ancestors of the adoptive mother as being the ancestors of the adopted son, do not appear to have been cited. The Court relied upon the dictum of the pandits in *Gunga Mya's* case, and its being accepted by Mr. W. MacNaghten as settling the law, and upon the absence of any text or precedent to support the claim set up by the adopted son. The case of *Gungapershad Roy* appears to have been dealt with differently by the different Judges. Messrs. Levinge and Roberts say, "All that the case of *Gungapershad Roy* proves is, that the ancestors in the ascending line of the adoptive mother of the adoptive son may, as distant relations, inherit the property of the said adopted son when there are no nearer heirs; that is to say, that the adoptive mother's grandfather might succeed as the 29th in degree, the adoptive mother's father being, according to Hindu law, the 28th in degree. The question now before us, viz., the right of an adoptive son to succeed to his adoptive mother's father's estate, was not raised or alluded to. It is no doubt argued by the respondent that there must be a reciprocal right, and that the adopted son should succeed to his adoptive mother's father.

(e) *Morun Moe Debeah v. Bejoy Kishto*, W. R. Sp. No. 121.

But this we cannot admit unless it be in the relation of a *Bandhu*, and in default of nearer heirs." But, with all respect for the learned Judges, they seemed to have missed the effect of the decision in *Gungapershad's* case. There was no question there as to whether the relations *ex parte maternâ* of the adopted son were nearer or more distant. The question was, whether, from the nature of the case, they could be relations at all. The point decided was that they were related in exactly the same degree, when tracing through an adoptive mother, as if they had traced through a natural mother; that is, that an adoptive mother was to all intents and purposes the same as a natural mother, when questions of inheritance arose. The natural mother's father is, according to Hindu law, the 28th in degree, and the Judges admit that an adoptive mother's father is the same. If then he is the same when he claims inheritance, it is hard to see why he should be different when inheritance is claimed from him. If A. is the grandfather of B., it certainly seems as if B. must be the grandson of A. Mr. Shumboonauth Pandit states this difficulty very clearly, and answered it by saying, "Such reciprocal rights are not, however, invariably any part of the Hindu system of succession. A man never succeeds his own daughter; and a husband is not invariably, to all kinds of his wife's *strîdhana* property, her heir exclusively or jointly with others; and though to some *strîdhana* of a step-mother a son may be heir, she can never claim any inheritance from such a son of her husband."

§ 152. But there seems to be a good deal of fallacy in this argument also. The want of reciprocity in the two first-named cases arises from the difference of the property claimed. A daughter is heir to her father's property, because she is part of himself, and through her issue rescues him from hell. But the only property to which he could be her heir, would be either property inherited by her from her husband, or her *strîdhana*. To the former he obviously has no natural claim. Succession to the latter rests upon special ground, and her father is in certain cases her heir as to it (*f*). further discussion.

(*f*) 1 Stra. H. L. 249.

Similarly the wife is her husband's heir, because she offers the funeral cake to him, and is the surviving half of himself. The only property to which he could be her heir would be property inherited from her own family or her strîdhana. As to both of these he is in the same position as her father in the cases above described. But in fact all such discussions seem quite beside the question. The answer given by Mr. Justice Shumboonauth depends on the ambiguous meaning of the words "reciprocal rights." In one sense there are not reciprocal rights between a father and a son. The son is next heir to the father, but the father is only seventh heir to the son. In another sense there are reciprocal rights; that is, given the paternal relationship, the rights of the son from the father follow just as much as the rights of the father from the son, whatever those rights may be in each case. *Gungapershad's* case decided, that with reference to the rights of ascendants, adoptive maternity stood on exactly the same footing as natural maternity. The question to be answered is, why this should not hold equally good in the case of descendants. To this question, it is submitted, that the illustrations furnished by Shumboonauth, J., were no answer.

Moran Moeë
Debeah's case :

§ 153. Again, it was said by the two other Judges, "the adopted son standing in the same relation as a natural-born son to his adoptive mother or her father, is altogether opposed to the theory and principle of adoption in the Hindu system. According to it a son of some sort is essential to the eternal happiness of a man, and in consideration of the performance of funeral obsequies, the adopted son succeeds to the estate of his adopting father. But the woman needs no such mediation." This is quite true, but is again beside the question. The only point is, how far does the fiction of Hindu law as to the effect of adoption extend. This can only be ascertained by reference to Hindu writers, and the passages of the *Dattaka Mimâmsâ* and *Dattaka Chandrikâ* above quoted (§ 149) seem to establish that affiliation makes the adopted be the son, not only of his adoptive father, but of that father's wife or wives, exactly as if he had been begotten by the father upon the wife or upon one of the wives. If so, the fact that

adoption is not necessary for a woman does not preclude heirship to her or through her, any more than it prevents the adopted son being heir to his father's brother, who did not require the adoption.

§ 154. This decision was followed in Madras in a case where the property of an adoptive mother's father was in dispute, the claimants on one side being her son by adoption, on the other side the grandson of her father's brother. The former, if natural-born, was of course the heir. But the claim of the latter was maintained by the High Court. It was admitted that the Dattaka Mimâṁsâ was in favour of the succession, and also that an argument in support of it might fairly be drawn from the Bengal case in 1859. But against this the Court put the direct decision in W. R. Sp. No. 121, and proceeded to observe, "There is no direct text of Hindu law, with exception of those in the Dattaka Mimâṁsâ (g), nor is there any case to be found in either of the Presidencies favouring such a claim. Why should the claim be of so rare occurrence if there is any foundation for the right? Then there is an utter silence of the law in parts of it where it might be particularly expected to speak out upon this subject; as where barrenness and childless widowhood are spoken of as bars to inheritance, and where the expression 'capable of bearing children' occurs" (h). followed in Madras. ✓

§ 155. On the other hand in Bengal, in a case subsequent to the case of *Morun Moe Debeah*, it has been held that an adopted son succeeds to the strîdhana of his adoptive mother. Neither the last-named case nor that of 1859 are referred to. The Court distinguished the case from the dictum of the pandits in *Gunga Mya's* case (§ 150) by saying, "The question put to the pandit related to property which had descended to a woman from her father not as strîdhana, but in the ordinary course of inheritance; and it may be, as explained to us by Baboo Kishen Kishore, that the reason why the adopted son is excluded from the succession in such cases is, that he is adopted into his adoptive father's family, Adopted son takes strîdhana of adoptive mother.

(g) Those in the Dattaka Chandrikâ appear to have been overlooked.

(h) *Chinna Ramakristna v. Minatchi*, 7 Mad. H. C. 245.

and not into his mother's family, and cannot perform the *çhrâddha* of his maternal grandfather, though he can perform that of his adoptive mother. But with regard to *strîdhana* the adopted son would succeed to it after the daughters as a son born" (i). It would be interesting to know where Baboo Kishen Kishore found the statement that an adoptive son cannot perform the *çhrâddha* of his maternal grandfather. Certainly not in the *Dattaka Mimânsâ* or *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, both of which assert exactly the opposite. Nor is it obvious why there should be any such distinction. The only fiction consists in making the adopted son be the son of his adoptive mother. This the case just cited has decided that he is. But if that step is once granted, it seems to follow that he must be the grandson of that mother's father, and so on through the rest of the series.

N. W. Provinces
in conflict with
Madras.

§ 156. The very case above suggested by the Bengal High Court actually arose very lately in the N. W. Provinces. There an adopted son claimed property which his adoptive mother had taken by inheritance from her own father. She of course only took it for life, and the plaintiff could not succeed unless he could make out that he was the heir of her father (k). It was contended that he was not such an heir. All the previous cases, except that of the Madras High Court, were cited. The Full Bench, however, decided in favour of the plaintiff, holding that upon adoption the affiliation of the son become complete, and that he obtained exactly the same rights in the maternal line as he would have possessed if he had been the natural-born son of the adopter's wife (l). The result on the whole appears to be, that reasoning and the Hindu writers are in favour of the claims of the adopted son to succeed *ex parte maternâ* as well as *ex parte paternâ*; and that as regards judicial authority, the Madras High Court and that of the N. W. Provinces are in direct conflict with each other,

(i) *Teen Cowrie v. Dinonath*, 3 W. R. 40, and so laid down by the Pandits in *Bombay*, 1 W. & B. 207.

(k) See *futwah*, ante, § 150.

(l) *Sham Kuar v. Gaya Din*, 1 All. 255.

while the pandits and Judges of the Bengal High Court are in conflict with themselves. *Dignus vindice nodus.*

§ 157. Cases where a legitimate and an adopted son exist together can only occur lawfully, where a legitimate son has been born after an adoption. The adoption of a son by one who had male issue would be absolutely invalid (§ 95), and the son so adopted would be entitled to no share whatever. It may be suggested, on the authority of a text ascribed to Manu, that he would be entitled to have his marriage ceremony performed, which I suppose includes maintenance also. But the text, if in force at all at present, seems to me to relate rather to informal than to wholly invalid adoptions, which would create no change of status (*m*). Where however a legitimate son is born after an adoption, which was valid when it took place, the latter is entitled to share along with the legitimate son, taking a portion which is sometimes spoken of as being one-fourth, and sometimes as being one-third of that of the after-born son (*n*). Dr. Wilson says that the variance is only apparent, and that all the texts mean the same thing, viz., that the property should be divided into four shares, of which the adopted son gets one. That is to say, he gets one-fourth of the whole, or one-third of the portion of the natural-born son (*o*). Whatever may have been the original meaning of the texts, a difference of usage seems to have sprung up, according to which the adopted son takes one-third of the whole in Bengal, and one-fourth of the whole in other Provinces which follow Benares law (*p*). The Madras High Court, however, have decided on the authority of the Sarasvâti-Vilâsa, that the fourth which he is to take is not a fourth of the whole, but a fourth of the share taken by the legitimate son. Consequently the estate would be divided into five shares, of which he would take one, and the legitimate son the re-

After-born
legitimate son.

Share of adopted
son.

✓
Madras.

(*m*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, vi. § 1, 2; Dattaka Chandrikâ, vi. § 3.

(*n*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, x. § 1; Dattaka Chandrikâ, v. § 16, 17; Mitâksharâ, i. 11, § 24, 25; Dâya Bhâga, x. § 9; D. K. S. viii. § 23; 3 Dig. 154, 179, 290; V. May., iv. 5, § 25; 2 W. MacN. 184.

(*o*) Wilson's Works, v. 52.

(*p*) 1 W. MacN. 70; 2 W. MacN. 184; F. MacN. 137; *Taramohun v. Kripa Moyee*, 9 W. R. 423; 1 Stra. H. L. 99.

Bombay.

mainder. A similar construction has been put upon the texts in Bombay (*q*). Nanda Paṇḍita suggests a further explanation, that he is to take a quarter share; *i.e.*, a fourth of what he would have taken as a legitimate son, that is to say a fourth of one-half, or one-eighth (*r*). Where there are several after-born sons, of course the shares will vary according to the principle adopted. Supposing there were two legitimate sons, then upon the principle laid down by Mr. MacNaghten the estate would be divided into seven shares in Benares, and into five shares in Bengal. According to the Sarasvâti-Vilâsa it would be divided into nine shares, the adopted son taking one share in each case. According to Nanda Paṇḍita he would take one-twelfth (*s*). Among various castes in Western India the rights of the adopted son vary from one-half, one-third, and one-fourth to next to nothing, the adoptive father being at liberty, on the birth of a legitimate son, to give him a present and turn him adrift (*t*).

Çûdras.

According to a text of Vṛiddha Gautama, an adopted and an after-born son share equally. This text is said in the Dattaka Chandrikâ to apply only to Çûdras, and in the Dattaka Mimâṃsâ it is explained away altogether, as referring to an after-born son destitute of good qualities. Mr. W. MacNaghten and Sir Thomas Strange say it is in force among Çûdras in Southern India, and M. Gibelin says it is the rule among all classes in Pondicherry. It is the rule still in Northern Ceylon. Baboo Shamachurn says that in Bengal this rule only applies to the lower class of Çûdras (*u*).

Survivorship.

§ 158. When the legitimate and adopted son survive the father, and then the legitimate son dies without issue, it has been held in Madras that the adopted son takes the whole property by survivorship (*v*). Of course it would be different in Bengal, if the legitimate son left a widow, daughter, &c.

(*q*) *Ayyavu v. Niladatchi*, 1 Mad. H. C. 45; 1 W. & B. 43.

(*r*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. § 40; Suth. Syn. 678.

(*s*) F. MacN. 151; 1 MacN. 70.

(*t*) Steele, 47, 186.

(*u*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. § 43; Dattaka Chandrikâ, v. § 32; 1 Stra. H. L. 99; 1 W. MacN. 70, n.; 1 Gib. 82; Thesawalemo, ii. § 2; V. Darp. 979.

(*v*) 1 Mad. H. C. 49, note.

§ 159. By adoption the boy is completely removed from his natural family as regards all civil rights or obligations. He ceases to perform funeral ceremonies for those of his family for whom he would otherwise have offered oblations, and he loses all rights of inheritance as completely as if he had never been born (*x*). And, conversely, his natural family cannot inherit from him (*y*), nor is he liable for their debts (*z*). Of course, however, if the adopter was already a relation of the adoptee, the latter by adoption would simply alter his degree of relationship, and as the son of his adopting father, would become the relative of his natural parents, and in this way mutual rights of inheritance might still exist. The rule is merely that he loses the rights which he possessed, *quâ* natural son. And the tie of blood, with its attendant disabilities, is never extinguished. Therefore, he cannot after adoption marry any one whom he could not have married before adoption (*a*). Nor can he adopt out of his own natural family a person whom, by reason of relationship, he could not have adopted had he remained in it (*b*). He is equally incompetent to marry within his adoptive family within the forbidden degrees (*c*).

Removal from
natural family.

§ 160. An exception to the rule that adoption severs a son from his natural family exists in the case of what is called a *dvyamúshyâyana*, or son of two fathers. This term has a twofold acceptation. Originally it appears to have been applied to a son who was begotten by one man upon the wife of another, but for and on behalf of that other. He was held to be entitled to inherit in both families, and was bound to perform the funeral oblations of both his actual and his fictitious fathers (*d*). This is the meaning in which the

Case of son of
two fathers.

(*x*) Manu, ix. 142; Dattaka Mimâṃsā, vi. § 6—8; Dattaka Chandrikā, ii. § 18—20; Mitāksharā, i. 11, § 32; V. May., iv. 5, § 21. See *contra*, 1 Gib. 95, as to Pondicherry.

(*y*) 1 W. MacN. 69; *Rayan Kristnamachariar v. Kuppaniengar*, 1 Mad. H. C. 180.

(*z*) *Pranvullubh Gokul v. Deocrisn Tooljaram*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 4; *Kasheepershad v. Bunseedhur*, 4 N. W. P. (S. D.) 343.

(*a*) Dattaka Mimâṃsā, vi. § 10; Dattaka Chandrikā, iv. § 8; V. May., iv. 5, § 30.

(*b*) *Moottia Moodelly v. Uppon Venkatacherry*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, p. 117.

(*c*) Dattaka Mimâṃsā, vi. § 25, 38.

(*d*) Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 12; Nārada, 13, § 23; Dattaka Chandrikā, ii. § 35.

term is used in the *Mitāksharā*, but sons of this class are now obsolete (e). Another meaning is that of a son who has been adopted with an express or implied understanding that he is to be the son of both fathers. This again seems to take place under different circumstances. One is what is called the *Anitya*, or temporary adoption, where the boy is taken from a different *gotra*, after the tonsure has been performed in his natural family. He performs the ceremonies of both fathers, and inherits in both families, but *his* son returns to his original *gotra* (f). This form of adoption seems now to be obsolete. At all events I know of no decided case affirming its existence. Another case is that of an adoption by one brother of the son of another brother. He is already for certain purposes considered to be the son of his uncle. When he is the only son, the law appears to reconcile the conflicting principles that a man should not give away his only son, and that a brother's son should be adopted, by allowing the adoption, but requiring the boy so adopted to perform the ceremonies of both fathers, and admitting him to inherit to both in the absence of legitimate issue. It is stated by Mr. Strange in his *Manual* that the *dryamūshyāyaṇa* in this sense also is obsolete. And so it was laid down in one Madras case. But the weight of authority in opposition to that statement seems to be overwhelming (g).

After-born son.

§ 161. Where a legitimate son is born to the natural father of a *dryamūshyāyaṇa*, subsequently to the adoption, the latter takes half the share of the former; if, however, the legitimate son is born to the adopting father, the adopted son takes half the share which is prescribed by law for an adopted son, exclusively related to his adoptive father, where legitimate issue may be subsequently born to that person (h), that is half of one-fourth or one-third, according to the doc-

(e) *Mitāksharā*, i. 10; 2 *Stra. H. L.* 82, 118.

(f) 2 *Stra. H. L.* 120; 1 *W. MacN.* 71. See *futwah* of Pandits in *Shumshere Mull v. Dilraj Konwur*, 2 *S. D.* 169 (216); *Dattaka Mimāṃsā*, vi. § 41—43; *Dattaka Chandrikā*, ii. § 37.

(g) *Stra. Man.* § 99; *Mad. Dec.* of 1859, p. 81; *Dattaka Chandrikā*, v. § 33; *V. May.*, iv. 5, § 22, 25; *Dattaka Mimāṃsā*, vi. § 34—36, 47, 48. And see authorities cited *ante*, § 127.

(h) *Dattaka Chandrikā*, v. § 33, 34.

trines of different schools (§ 157). The Mayûkha, however, seems only to allow him to inherit in the adoptive family, if there are legitimate sons subsequently born in both, and then gives him the share usual in such a case where the adoption has been in the ordinary form, that is, one-fourth or one-third (*i*). It lays down no rule for the case of legitimate sons arising in one family only.

§ 162. It is probable that the rule which deprived an adopted son of the right to inherit in his natural family, originated, not from any fiction of a change of paternity, but simply from an equitable idea, that one who had been sent to seek his fortunes in another family, and whose services were lost to the family in which he was born, ought not to inherit in both. This is the view taken of the matter in the Punjâb, where it is said that if the natural father dies without heirs, the village custom would be in favour of the child's double succession (*k*). In Pondicherry a boy, notwithstanding adoption, preserves his rights of inheritance in his natural family, if he has not found a sufficient fortune in his acquired family, and in all cases if his natural father and brothers have died without issue. This doctrine, however, is based not upon any special usage, but upon the view which the French jurists have taken of the Hindu texts (*l*). The *Thesawaleme* merely states that "an adopted child, being thus brought up and instituted as an heir, loses all claim to the inheritance of his own parents, as he is no longer considered to belong to that family, so that he may not inherit from them." It is not stated whether his right would revive if there were no heirs in his natural family. But he only forfeits rights to the extent to which he acquires others; therefore if his adoption is only by the husband, he continues to inherit to his natural mother; if it is only by the wife, he continues to inherit to his natural father (*m*).

§ 163. A question of very great importance, which seems plain enough in theory, but which appears to be still unset-

(*i*) V. May., iv. 5, § 25.

(*k*) Punjâb Cust. 81.

(*l*) 1 Gib. 95, citing Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, i. § 31, 32, vi. § 9; Mitâksharâ, i. 10, § 1 note, § 32, note.

(*m*) Thesawaleme, ii. § 2.

Effect of an invalid adoption.

Madras.

tioned, is as to the effect of an invalid adoption. *Primâ facie* one would imagine that it would confer no rights in the adoptive family, and take away no rights in the natural family. The claim to enforce rights in the former family, or to resist them in the latter, must depend upon a change of *status*, and if the adoption, upon which such change depended, were invalid, it would seem as if no change could have taken place. But there certainly is much authority the other way. I have already (§ 121) noticed the texts which award maintenance to a son adopted out of an inferior class, and suggested that they are merely a survival from a time when such adoptions were in fact valid, though less efficacious than others (*n*). A text is also ascribed to Manu which lays down that "He who adopts a son without observing the rules ordained, should make him a participator of the rites of marriage, not a sharer of 'wealth.'" This text seems to be interpreted as applying to a person who makes an adoption without observing the proper forms (*o*). Sir Thomas Strange cites these texts, as establishing that a person may be adopted under circumstances which will deprive him of his rights in one family, without entitling him to more than maintenance in the other. But he questions the proposition in a note, and refers to Mr. Sutherland as being of opinion that if the adoption were void the natural rights would remain (*p*). In one old case the pandits of the Sudr Court of Madras laid it down, that an adoption of a married man over thirty years of age, and with three children, was invalid, but that he was entitled to maintenance in the family of his adopting father. The proposition was cited before the High Court, and approved of. The approval, however, was extra-judicial, as the High Court considered that they were bound by former decrees to treat the adoption as valid, and actually awarded the plaintiff his full rights as adopted son (*q*). In a later case, where a boy had been adopted by a widow without any authority, it was held that the adoption was wholly invalid, and gave the boy

(*n*) See *per cur.*, 1 Mad. H. C. 367.

(*o*) Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, v. § 45; Dattaka Chandrikâ, ii. § 17, vi. § 3.

(*p*) 1 Stra. H. L. 82.

(*q*) *Ayyavu Muppanar v. Niladatchi*, 1 Mad. H. C. 45.

no right to maintenance. The Court said : “ In reason and good sense it would hardly seem a matter of doubt that where no valid adoption, in other words, no adoption, has taken place, no claim of right in respect of the legal relationship of adoption can properly be enforced at law.” The Court also expressed their opinion that the natural rights of the plaintiff remained quite unaffected (r).

§ 164. In Bengal the case has twice arisen incidentally, Bengal.

though in neither instance in such a manner as to require a decision. In the first case, which was before the Supreme Court, Colvile, C.J., said, “ It has been said on one side and denied on the other (neither side producing either evidence or authority in support of their contention) that a *Dattaka*, or son given, would forfeit the right to inherit to his natural father, even though he might not, for want of sufficient power, have been duly adopted into the other family. This proposition seems to be contrary to reason, but for all that may be very good Hindu Law. But from the enquiries we have made, we believe the true state of the law on the subject to be this. There may undoubtedly be cases in which a person, whose adoption proves invalid, may have forfeited his right to be regarded as a member of his natural family. In such a case some of the old texts speak of him as a slave, entitled only to maintenance in the family into which he was imperfectly adopted. But one very learned person has assured me, that the impossibility of returning to his natural family depends, not on the mere gift or even acceptance of a son, but on the degree in which the ceremonies of adoption have been performed ; and that there is a difference in this respect between Brâhmans and Çûdras. A Brâhman being unable to return to his natural family if he has received the Brâhmanical thread in the other family ; the Çûdra, if not validly adopted, being able to return to his natural family at any time before his marriage in the other family. Even if it be granted that a person, merely because he is a *Dattaka*, or son given, apart from the performance of any further ceremony, becomes incapable of returning to his natural family, that rule would not govern the case of an

Depends on performance of ceremonies.

adoption that was invalid because the widow had not power to adopt. For to constitute a *Dattaka*, there must be both gift and acceptance. A widow cannot accept a son for her husband unless she is duly empowered to do so, and, therefore, her want of authority, if it invalidates the adoption, also invalidates the gift" (s).

Rule suggested.

§ 165. In the above passage, the words "ceremonies *after* adoption" ought apparently to be substituted for the words "ceremonies of adoption." The principle of the rule suggested seems to be, that a man cannot take his place in his natural family unless the essential ceremonies have been performed in it, and that if performed in a wrong family they cannot be performed over again in the right one. But that where no such ceremonies have followed upon the adoption, he can return, if there has not been a valid giving and receiving. Where there has been a valid giving and receiving, then, apparently, he could not return, even though, in consequence of some other defect, the adoption may have been so far invalid, as not to invest the person taken with the full privileges of an adopted son.

§ 166. In the other Bengal case, the Court refused to enforce specific performance of a contract to give a boy in adoption in consideration of an annuity. They said that this would be a *Krítaka* adoption which is now invalid, therefore that the contract, "if it were capable of being carried out, and were recognized by the Court, would involve an injury to the person and property of the adopted son, inasmuch as if it could be proved that the boy was purchased and not given, it is very probable that the adoption would be set aside; and if such adoption were set aside, he would not only lose his status in the family of his adopting father, but also lose his right of inheritance to his natural parents" (t). In this case there would have been a complete giving and acceptance. But if the mode of doing so had ceased to be lawful, it is difficult to see how there could be a valid giving and acceptance, any more than if the son had been a self-

(s) *Sreemutty Rajcoomaree v. Nobocomar Mullick*, 1 Boul., 137; Sevest., 641, note.

(t) *Eshan Kishore v. Haris Chandra*, 13 B. L. R., App., 42.

given or a castaway. It may be suggested whether the whole theory of imperfect adoptions is not a relic of the times when some sorts of adoption were falling into disfavour, though still practised and permitted. The view taken by the Madras High Court, that an adoption must either be effectual for all purposes, or a nullity, has the merit of being practical and intelligible, while doing substantial justice to all parties.

§ 167. A foster-child, that is, one who has been taken Foster-child. into the family of another, nurtured, educated, married, and put forward in life at his expense, as if he were his son, but without the performance of an actual adoption, does not obtain any rights of inheritance thereby (*u*). But a gift made to such a person by his foster-father, if in other respects valid, will not be made void, merely because he was under the mistaken belief that the foster-son would be able to perform his funeral obsequies (*x*).

§ 168. The case of an adoption made by a widow to her Adoption by widow : husband, after her husband's death, raises special considerations, owing to the double fact that the person adopted has in general a better title than the person in possession, while on the other hand the title of the person so in possession, has been a perfectly valid title up to the date of adoption. Questions of this sort arise in two ways. First, with regard to title to an estate; secondly, with regard to the validity of acts done between the date of the husband's death and the date of adoption.

§ 169. It has already been pointed out (*y*) that a widow with authority to adopt cannot be compelled to act upon it unless she likes. Consequently the vesting of the inheritance cannot be suspended until she exercises her right. Immediately upon her husband's death it passes to the next heir, whether that heir be herself or some other person, and that heir takes with as full rights as if no such power to adopt existed, subject only to the possibility of his estate being divested by the exercise of that power. But as soon its effect.

(*u*) 2 Stra. H. L. 111, 113; Steele, 184; *Bhimanna v. Tayappa*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 124.

(*x*) *Abhachari v. Ramachendraya*, 1 Mad. H. C. 393.

(*y*) *Ante*, § 104.

Devests estate
of widow ;

as the power is exercised, the adopted son stands exactly in the same position as if he had been born to his adoptive father, and his title relates back to the death of his father to this extent, that he will divest the estate of any person in possession of the property of that father to whom he would have had a preferable title, if he had been in existence at his adoptive father's death. One of the most common cases is an adoption by a widow, who is herself heir to her husband. The result of such an adoption is that her limited estate as widow at once ceases. The adopted son at once becomes full heir to the property, the widow's rights are reduced to a claim for maintenance, and if, as would generally happen, the adopted son is a minor, she will continue to hold as his guardian in trust for him (z). Where there are several widows, holding jointly, one who has authority from her husband to adopt would of course, by exercising it, divest both her own estate and that of her co-widows. And in the Mahratta country, where no authority is required, it is held that the elder widow may of her own accord adopt, and thereby destroy the estate of the younger widow, without obtaining her consent. The Court said, "It would seem to be unjust to allow the elder widow to defeat the interest of the younger by an adoption against her wish. But, on the other hand, if the adoption is regarded as the performance of a religious duty and a meritorious act, to which the assent of the husband is to be implied wherever he has not forbidden it, it would seem that the younger widow is bound to give her consent, being entitled to a due provision for her maintenance, and if she refuses, the elder widow may adopt without it" (a). It was not decided, but it seems to be an inference from the language of the Court, that they did not think the junior widow would have had the same right. Of course an adoption would *à fortiori* divest all estates which follow that of the widow, such as the right of a daughter, or a daughter's son (b).

(z) *Dhurm Das Pandey v. Mt. Shama Soondri*, 3 M. I. A. 229. Of course the adopted son does not take any of the property which is held by the widow as her *strīdhana*. W. & B. 99—100.

(a) *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 181, 192. See *post*, § 174.

(b) *Ramkishan Surkheyl v. Mt. Stri Mutee Dibia*, 3 S. D. 367 (489).

§ 170. But an adoption will equally divest the estate of one who takes before the widow, provided he would take after the son. For instance, where, in the Madras Presidency, an undivided brother succeeded to an impartible Zemindary in Berhampore, on the decease of his brother, the last holder, it was held that his estate was divested by an adoption made by the widow of the latter after his death, and under his authority (c). On the other hand, if the estate has once vested in a person who would have had a preferable title to that of a natural-born son, an adoption will not defeat his title or that of his successor, whether male or female, unless the successor be herself the widow who makes the adoption. Both branches of this rule are illustrated by decisions of the Privy Council. In the first case *Gour Kishore*, a Zemindar in Bengal, died leaving a widow *Chundrabullee*, and a son, *Bhowanee*. Previous to his death he executed a document whereby he directed his wife to adopt a son in the event of failure of her own issue. *Bhowanee* succeeded to the Zemindary, married, came to full age and died, leaving no issue, but a widow, *Mt. Bhoobun Moyee*. *Chundrabullee* then adopted *Ram Kishore* under her authority. He sued the widow of *Bhowanee* for the estate. It will be remembered that under the law of Bengal a widow is the heir of her husband, dying without issue, even though he has an undivided brother. The Judicial Committee held that the plaintiff's suit must be dismissed, since his adoption gave him no title that was valid against *Bhowanee's* widow. They said, "In this case *Bhowanee Kishore* had lived to an age which enabled him to perform, and it is to be presumed that he had performed, all the religious services which a son could perform for a father. He had succeeded to the ancestral property as heir : he had full power of disposition over it ; he might have

or of inferior heir.

Estate of preferable heir not divested.

Chundrabullee's case.

(c) *Sri Raghunada v. Sri Broso Kishoro*, 3 I. A. 154. The facts of this case seem to have been misunderstood by the High Court of Bengal, in *Kally Prosonno v. Gocool Chunder*, *post*, § 176, where they say (2 Calc. 309), "The property in dispute in that case was not a joint family property, and the surviving members of the joint family unjustly took possession of it, by excluding the widow of the owner, who was entitled by the *Mitāksharā* law to succeed to it." The property was joint though impartible, and it was admitted that, as the brothers were undivided, the widow had no right to anything beyond maintenance.

alienated it : he might have adopted a son to succeed to it if he had no male issue of his body. He could have defeated every intention which his father entertained with respect to the property. On the death of Bhowanee Kishore, his wife succeeded as heir to him, and would have equally succeeded in that character in exclusion of his brothers, if he had had any. She took a vested estate, as his widow, in the whole of his property. It would be singular if a brother of Bhowanee Kishore, made such by adoption, could take from his widow the whole of his property, when a natural-born brother could have taken no part. If Ram Kishore is to take any of the ancestral property, he must take all he takes by substitution for the natural-born son, and not jointly with him. Whether under his testamentary power of disposition Gour Kishore could have restricted the interest of Bhowanee in his estate to a life interest, or could have limited it over (if his son left no issue male, or such issue male failed) to an adopted son of his own, it is not necessary to consider ; it is sufficient to say that he has neither done nor attempted to do this. The question is, whether, the estate of his son being unlimited, and that son having married and left a widow his heir, and that heir having acquired a vested estate in her husband's property as widow, a new heir can be substituted by adoption, who is to defeat that estate, and take as an adopted son what a legitimate son of Gour Kishore would not have taken. This seems contrary to all reason, and to all the principles of Hindu law, as far as we can collect them. It must be recollected that the adopted son, as such, takes by inheritance and not by devise. Now the rule of Hindu law is, that in the case of inheritance, the person to succeed must be the heir of the last full owner. In this case Bhowanee Kishore was the last full owner, and his wife succeeds, as his heir, to a widow's estate. On her death the person to succeed will again be the heir at the death of Bhowanee Kishore. If Bhowanee Kishore had died unmarried, his mother, Chundrabullee, would have been his heir, and the question of adoption would have stood on quite different grounds. By exercising the power of adoption, she would have divested

Unless heiress is
adopting widow.

no estate but her own, and this would have brought the case within the ordinary rule; but no case has been produced, no decision has been cited from the text books, and no principle has been stated to show that by the mere gift of a power of adoption to a widow, the estate of the heir of a deceased son, vested in possession, can be defeated or divested"(d).

§ 171. The case suggested by their Lordships at the close of the above quotation, was the case which actually came before them for decision in 1876. There a Zemindar in Guntur in the Madras Presidency died, leaving a widow, an infant son, and daughters. The son was placed in possession, but died a minor, and unmarried. His mother was then placed in possession, and adopted a son, without any authority from her deceased husband, but with the consent of all the husband's sapindas. This was before the decision in the *Ramnaad* case (§ 106), and the Government refused to recognize the adoption, and the adopted son was never put in possession. On the death of the mother the Collector placed the daughters in possession, apparently treating the heirship as one which had still to be traced to their father, the last full-aged Zemindar. The Madras High Court treated the adoption as invalid, on grounds which have been already discussed. On appeal the Privy Council maintained the adoption, and the right of the adopted son to take as heir. They held that in the Madras Presidency the consent of the sapindas was as efficacious for the purpose of enabling a widow to adopt in lieu of a son who had died without issue, as it admittedly was where there never had been issue at all. As to the effect of the adoption they proceeded to say, "If then there had been a written authority to the widow to adopt, the fact of the descent being cast would have made no difference, unless the case fell within the authority of that of *Chundrabullee*, reported in 10 Moore, in which it was decided, that the son having died leaving a widow in whom the inheritance had vested, the mother could not defeat the estate which had so become vested by

Guntur case.

(d) *Mt. Bhoobun Moyee Dibia v. Ram Kishore Acharj Chowdry*, 10 M. I. A., 279, 310.

making an adoption, though in pursuance of a written authority from her husband. That authority does not govern the present case, in which the adoption is made in derogation of the adoptive mother's estate; and indeed expressly recognizes the distinction"(e).

§ 171A. Both in Chundrabullee's case and in the Guntur case just cited, it seems to have been assumed by the Judicial Committee, that an adoption made by a woman on behalf of her deceased husband would always divest her own estate, whether she held as widow of the person to whom she adopted, or as mother of the son of that person. But in a more recent appeal before the Privy Council, it was suggested that there might be a difference in that respect between the two cases. In the former case, the adoption produces a son who takes as heir to his own father, and as such heir is prior to the widow. But in the latter case the adoption produces a son who is brother to the last male holder, and it is to the last male holder that descent is traced. Now a mother ranks before a brother as heir to her own son. Why then should he destroy her estate? If the adoption could be treated as relating back to the life of the deceased, then it would have given him an undivided brother, who would take by survivorship in preference to the mother. But it would seem that no such fiction is now admitted, (§ 178). In the particular instance it was unnecessary to decide the point, but it is well worthy of attention (f).

Principle of
above cases.

§ 172. It will be observed that in both the Madras cases, in which the right of the adopted son was affirmed by the Privy Council, the property had descended lineally from the person to whom the adoption was made. In the Berhampore case (§ 170), the last male holder was the person to whom the adoption was made. In the Guntur case (§ 171), there had been an intermediate descent to his own son, and on his death without issue the Zemindary had reverted to the person making the adoption, who was at

(e) *Vellanki v. Venkata Rama Lakshmi*, 4 I. A. 1; *Boicunt Money v. Kishen Soonder*, 7 W. R. 392.

(f) *Ramasawmy v. Venkatramien*, 6 I. A.

once his mother and his father's widow. Two different cases, however, have arisen. First, where the property has descended to A. the son of B. to whom the adoption is made, as in the Guntur case, but has passed at his death to a person different from the widow who makes the adoption. Secondly, where the property has descended from A., and the adoption has been made to B., a collateral relation of A. Let it be assumed that the adopted son of B. would in each case have been the heir to A., if he had been adopted previously to the death of A. The question arises, whether, if he is adopted subsequently to the death, he will divest the estate of the person who has taken as heir of A. It has been held that he will not.

Cases in which
estate will not
be divested.

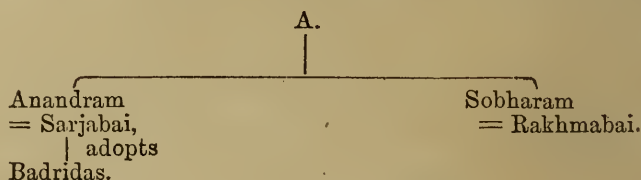
§ 173. The first point was decided in a Madras case. There N. had died, leaving a widow the first defendant, and a son, Sitappah, by another wife. Sitappah died unmarried, and thereupon his stepmother, the first defendant, adopted Munisawmy, who was the son of one Bali. Bali sued as guardian of his son to establish the adoption. Its validity was conceded by the High Court. It seems to have been admitted in argument that the first defendant, as stepmother, was not the heir of Sitappah, and that Bali was his heir. Upon this the High Court held that the adoption conveyed no title to the property. They said, "Even if it be considered that N.'s widow possessed or acquired in 1870 (the date of Sitappah's death) power to adopt a son to her husband, it has to be determined whether, according to Hindu law, any adoption could then be lawfully made by her. The principle of the decision of the Privy Council in the case reported in 10 Moore's Indian Appeals, 279, appears to us to govern this case, and show that it could not. Chinna Sitappah had inherited his father's property; "He had full power of disposition over it; he might have alienated it; he might have adopted a son to succeed to it, if he had no male issue of his body. He could have defeated every intention which his father entertained with respect to the property." On the death of Chinna Sitappah, the next heir, it is here admitted, was Bali Reddy, who is the natural father of the minor plaintiff, and who has also

Madras decision.

other sons. The inheritance having passed in 1870 to Bali Reddy, still remains in him ; and we must hold upon the authority cited, that the estate of the deceased son, thus vested in possession, cannot be defeated and divested" (g).

Bombay
decision.

§ 174. The second point arose both in Bombay and in Bengal. In the Bombay case the facts were as follows :—



Anandram and Sobharam were undivided brothers, who died leaving widows but no male issue. Anandram died first, therefore his whole interest passed to Sobharam, and on the death of the latter the entire property vested in his widow Rakhmabai. After the death of Sobharam, Sarjabai, widow of Anandram, adopted a son. Thereupon a creditor raised the question, whether he took the estate of Sobharam. It was argued that the case in 10 M. I. A. 279, established that an adoption can never be held valid, which has the effect of divesting an estate once vested. Upon that however Melvill, J. remarked, "In that case A. claimed, by virtue of adoption, an estate which B. had inherited from C. Even if A. had been a natural-born son, B. and not A. would have been the heir of C. ; and it was held that under such circumstances A. could not defeat B.'s estate. There would seem to be no room for doubt on this point, and the decision in that case certainly does not support the argument (which is moreover at variance with the decision in *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai*) (h), that an adoption can in no case operate to defeat an interest once vested." The same Judge however expressed a strong opinion that the adoption would not be valid on the ground suggested by the Judicial Committee in the *Ramnaad* case (i). He summarised their views as follows :—"In other words, when the estate is vested in the widow, she may adopt without the consent of reversioners,

(g) *Annamah v. Mahbu Bali Reddy*, 8 Mad. H. C., 108.

(h) 5 Bomb. A. C. 181 ; *ante*, § 169.

(i) 12 M. I. A. 397 ; *ante*, § 107.

but when the estate is vested in persons other than the widow, and the immediate effect of an adoption would be to defeat the interest of those persons, then justice requires that their consent should be obtained. This proposition seems very reasonable and just." He distinguished the case from that of *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai* by saying: "The two widows being equally bound to take the measures necessary to secure their husband's future beatitude, the younger widow, who by withholding her consent, ignores the religious obligation imposed upon her, has no right to complain of injustice if the adoption be made by the elder without her consent. But it does not follow that the plea of injustice is to be equally disregarded where it is put forward by a person who is under no such religious obligation. In *Rakhmabai v. Radhabai* it was certainly laid down in the broadest terms that in the Mahratta country a Hindu widow may, without the consent of her husband's kindred, adopt a son to him, if the act is done by her in the proper and *bonâ fide* performance of a religious duty, and neither capriciously nor from a corrupt motive. But the Judges by whom that case was decided were not dealing with an adoption which would have had the effect of divesting an estate vested in a relative other than a widow, nor in any of the decided cases on which they relied was the validity of such an adoption in issue. It does not appear to me that the authorities quoted would be sufficient to support the validity of an adoption working such manifest injustice"(k).

Rupchand v.
Rakhmabai:

§ 175. As a matter of fact, the Court found that Sobharam's widow had given her consent to the adoption, so the whole of the above discussion was extra judicial. It will of course be observed that the Madras and the Bombay Courts went upon different grounds. The Madras Court considered that the question was decided by the authority of the Privy Council. But there was the difference between the two cases, that in *Chundrabullee's* case, the adopted son, if natural-born, would not have been heir to the property he claimed. In the Madras case he certainly would have

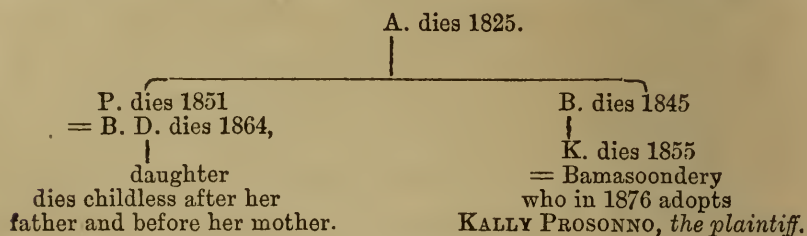
differs from
Madras ruling.

(k) *Rupchand v. Rakhmabai*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 114.

been. This was pointed out by the Bombay High Court (*l*). Their judgment proceeded upon the ground that the adoption itself was invalid. No objection of that sort could be taken in the Bengal case, and there the judgment went upon different grounds from those taken in either of the cases last cited. The facts of it were as follows:—

Bengal decision.

§ 176. P. and B. named in the annexed table were undivided brothers, who held their property in the quasi-severalty of the Bengal law. P. by his will bequeathed his



share to his widow B. D. for life, and after her to the sons of his daughter, if any, subject to trusts, legacies and annuities. The daughter died without issue during the widow's life, and at her death the widow made a will, bequeathing the property to the defendant as executor, for religious purposes. K. died in 1855, leaving to his widow authority to adopt. If she had exercised that authority prior to the death of B. D., there can be no doubt that the son adopted to K. would have been the heir of his grand-uncle P., and would have been entitled to set aside the will of B. D., and to claim the property of P., so far as he had not disposed of it by his will. But the power was not exercised till 1876. When the suit was brought by the adopted son, the Court held that he could not succeed. At the death of B. D. the whole property of P. must have vested in some one who was then the heir of P.; or if there was no such heir in existence, it must have passed to Government by escheat. The Court held, upon a review of all the cases, that there was no authority for holding that an estate, which had once vested in a person as heir of the last full owner, could be subsequently divested by the adoption of a person who

(*l*) See also the remarks made upon it by the Bengal High Court in *Ramsoonder v. Surbanee Dossee*, 22 W. R. 121.

would have been a nearer heir, had his adoption taken place previously to the death. They considered that the inheritance could not remain in a sort of latent abeyance, subject to be changed from one heir to another, on the happening of an event which might never take place, or only at some indefinite future time (*m*). Some passages in the judgment are more broadly expressed than they would have been if the Court had not misconceived the facts of the case in the Privy Council from Berhampore (*n*). But the decision itself, coupled with the other cases cited, seems to lead to the following conclusions: *First*, where an adoption is made to the last male holder, the adopted son will divest the estate of any person, whose title would have been inferior to his, if he had been adopted prior to the death. *Secondly*, where the adoption is not made to the last male holder, but is made by the widow of any previous holder, it will probably divest her estate, subject, however, to the doubt suggested in § 171A. *Thirdly*, under no other circumstances will an adoption made to one person divest the estate of any one who has taken that estate as heir of another person. All these rules seem to be consistent with natural justice. In the first case, the object of an adoption is to supply an heir to the deceased. That heir, when created, properly takes precedence over any one who is a less remote heir. Further, the services which he renders to the deceased are fitly rewarded by the estate. In the second case, the widow who makes the adoption exercises a discretion which may be intended to produce a preferable heir to herself. Naturally she takes the consequences. But in the third case, there can be no reason why an adoption which is intended to benefit A. should disturb the succession to the estate of B., who receives no benefit from it, and who has not been consulted upon it, or been instrumental in bringing it about.

Rules.

§ 177. In Bengal, where a father has the absolute power of disposing of his property, he may couple with his authority to the widow to adopt, a direction that the estate

Son's estate postponed.

(*m*) *Kally Prosonno v. Gocool Chunder*, 2 Cal. 295.

(*n*) See *ante*, § 170, note.

of the widow shall not be interfered with during her life, or indeed any other condition derogating from the interest which would otherwise be taken by the adopted son (*o*). In provinces governed by the Mitâksharâ law, where a son obtains a vested interest in his father's property by birth, such a direction would be invalid, unless the property to which it related was the self-acquisition of the father (*p*). It has been held in Bombay, that if the parent of the boy, when giving him in adoption, expressly agree with the widow that she shall remain in possession of the property during her lifetime, and she only accepts the boy on those terms, the agreement will bind him, as being made by his natural guardian, and within the powers given to such guardian by law (*q*). In a later case, however, before the Privy Council the effect of a similar agreement was much discussed, and not determined. The Committee refused to decide more than that such an agreement was not absolutely void, and therefore might be ratified by the youth on arriving at full age (*r*). *A fortiori*, an agreement by the adopted son himself when of full age, waiving his rights in favour of the widow, would be valid (*s*). And he may after adoption renounce all rights in his adopted family, but this will not restore him to the position he has abandoned in his natural family. Upon his renunciation the next heir will succeed (*t*).

Son's rights date
from adoption.

§ 178. The second question which arises in the case of an adoption by a widow after her husband's death, is as to the date at which the rights of the adopted son arise. It has been suggested that a son so adopted must be considered as a posthumous son, and that his rights would relate back to the death of the father when he ought to be considered as having been born, or even to the date of the authority to adopt, when he ought to be considered as having been conceived. The whole of the authorities on the point were

(*o*) *Radhamonee Debea v. Jadubnarain Roy*, S. D. of 1855, 139; *Prosunomoyee v. Ramsoonder*, S. D. of 1859, 162.

(*p*) *Narainah v. Savoobhadhy*, Mad. Dec. of 1854, 117.

(*q*) *Chitko Ragunath v. Janaki*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 199.

(*r*) *Ramasawmy v. Venkatramien*, 6 I. A.

(*s*) *Mt. Tara Muneo v. Dev Narain*, 3 S. D. 387 (516); 2 W. MacN. 183; *Mt. Bhugobutty v. Chowdry Bholanath*, 15 W. R. 63.

(*t*) *Ruvee Bhuir Sheo v. Roopshunker*, 2 Bor. 656, 662, 665.

examined in an elaborate judgment of the Sudder Court of Bengal, which was appealed against, and adopted in its entirety by the Privy Council, and which may be considered as having settled the question (u). The point for decision in the case was, whether a widow, who had received an authority to adopt, was thereby debarred from suing for her husband's estates in her own right. It was argued that she must be considered as a pregnant widow, and could only sue on behalf of the son whom she was about to bring forth. The Court refused to act upon any such fanciful analogy, and laid it down that although a son, when adopted, entered at once into the full rights of a natural-born son, his rights could not relate back to any earlier period. Till he was adopted, it might happen that he never would be adopted, and when he was adopted, his fictitious birth into his new family could not be ante-dated. It must not, however, be supposed that an adopted son would necessarily have to acquiesce in all the dealings with the estate between the death of his adoptive father and his own adoption. The validity of those acts would have to be judged of with reference to their own character, and the nature of the estate held by the person whom he supersedes. Where that person, as frequently happens, is a female, either a widow, a daughter, or a mother, her estate is limited by the usual restrictions which fetter an estate which descends by inheritance from a man to a woman. These restrictions exist quite independently of the adoption. The only effect of the adoption is that the person who can question them springs into existence at once, whereas in the absence of an adoption he would not be ascertained till the death of the woman. If she has created any incumbrances or made any alienations which go beyond her legal powers, the son can set them aside at once. If they are within her powers, he is as much bound by them as any other reversioner would be (v). And he is

How far he may dispute previous acts of widow.

(u) *Bamundoss Mookerjee v. Mt. Tarinee*, S. D. of 1850, 533; 7 M. I. A. 169. See cases collected, 3 M. Dig. 186.

(v) *Kishenmunnee v. Oodwunt Singh*, 3 S. D. 220 (304); *Ramkishen v. Mt. Strimutee*, 3 S. D. 367 (489), expd. 7 M. I. A. 178; *Doorga Soonduree v. Goureepersad*, S. D. of 1856, 170; *Sreenath Roy v. Ruttunmulla*, S. D. of 1859, 421; *Manikmulla v. Parbuttee*, ib. 515.

also bound, even though they were not fully within her powers, provided she obtained the consent of the persons who, at the time of the alienation, were the next heirs, and competent to give validity to the transaction (x). One recent case goes a good deal beyond this. A widow adopted a son under the authority of her husband. She succeeded him as his heir, and made an alienation, and then adopted another son. The Court held that the alienation was good as against the second adopted son (y). The decision was given without any inquiry as to the propriety of the alienation, and was rested on the authority of *Chundrabullee's* case (z). It does not seem to have occurred to the Court that a mother had no more than a limited estate, which, upon the authority of the case cited, was divested by the adoption. The son then came in for all rights which had not been lawfully disposed of, or barred during the continuance of that estate (a).

Acts of previous
male holder.

§ 179. I am not aware of any case which raised the same question, where the person whose estate was divested by adoption, was a male, and therefore a full owner. But I conceive the same rule would apply. Until adoption has taken place he is lawfully in possession, holding an estate which gives him the ordinary powers of alienation of a Hindu proprietor. No doubt he is liable to be superseded, but on the other hand he never may be superseded. It would be intolerable that he should be prevented from dealing with his own, on account of a contingency which may never happen. When the contingency has happened, it would be most inequitable that the purchaser should be deprived of rights which he obtained from one, who at the time was perfectly competent to grant them. Accordingly, where the brother of the last holder of a Zemindary was placed in possession in 1869, and subsequently ousted by an adoption to the late Zemindar, the Privy Council held that he could not be made accountable for mesne profits

(x) *Rajkrishna v. Kishoree*, 3 W. R. 14.

(y) *Gobindonath v. Ramkanay*, 24 W. R. 183, approved *per cur.*, 2 Calc. 307.

(z) 10 M. I. A. 279; *ante*, § 170.

(a) See as to the effect of acts done during the estate of a woman, *post*, § 536.

from the former date. Their Lordships said, "At that time Raghunada was, in default of a son of Adikonda, natural or adopted, unquestionably entitled to the Zemin-dary. The adoption took place on the 20th November, 1870, and the plaint states that the cause of action then accrued to the plaintiff. The plaint itself was filed on the 15th December, 1870, and there is no proof of a previous demand of possession. Their Lordships are of opinion that the account of mesne profits should run only from the commencement of the suit" (b).

§ 180. It is hardly necessary to say that as under the ordinary Hindu law an adoption by a widow must always be to her husband, and for his benefit, an adoption made by her to herself alone, would not give the adopted child any right, even after her death, to property inherited by her from her husband (c). Nor, indeed, to her own property, however acquired, such an adoption being nowhere recognized as creating any new *status*, except in Mithilâ, under the *Kritrima* system. But among dancing girls it is customary in Madras and Western India to adopt girls to follow their adoptive mother's profession, and the girls so adopted succeed to their property. No particular ceremonies are necessary, recognition alone being sufficient (d). In Calcutta, however, such adoptions have been held illegal (e). And it seems probable that the recognized immorality of the class of dancing girls might lead the Courts generally to follow this view (f).

Widow cannot adopt to herself.

Dancing girls.

§ 181. KRITRIMA ADOPTION.—According to the *Dattaka Mimâmsâ* the *Kritrima* form is still recognized by the general Hindu law, since the modern rule which refuses to recognize any sons, except the legitimate son and the son given, includes the *Kritrima* under the latter term (g). But the better opinion seems to be that this form is now obsolete,

Prevails in Mithilâ.

(b) *Sri Raghunada v. Sri Brosu Kishoro*, 3 I. A. 154, 193. As to alienations by the father himself, see *post*, § 297.

(c) *Chowdry Pudum Singh v. Koer Oodey Singh*, 12 M. I. A. 350.

(d) *Venkatachellum v. Venkatasawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1856, 65; Stra. Man. § 93, 99; Steele, 185, 186.

(e) *Hencower v. Hanscower*, 2 M. Dig. 133.

(f) See *ante*, § 51.

(g) *Dattaka Mimâmsâ*, ii. § 65.

except in the Mithilâ country, where it is the prevalent species (*h*). The cause of its continuance in Mithilâ is attributed by Mr. MacNaghten to the rule which exists there, which forbids an adoption by a widow even with her husband's authority. As the tendency of man is to defer an adoption until the last moment, the form which could be most rapidly and suddenly carried out, naturally found most favour (*i*).

Described.

§ 182. The *Kṛitrima* son is thus described by Manu (*k*) : "He is considered as a son made (or adopted) whom a man takes as his own son, the boy being equal in class, endued with filial virtues, acquainted with (the) merit (of performing obsequies to his adopter) and with (the) sin (of omitting them)." The *Mitâksharâ* adds the further definition "being enticed by the show of money or land, and being an orphan without father or mother; for, if they be living, he is subject to their control" (*l*).

Only adult.

§ 183. The consent of the adoptee is necessary to an adoption in this form (*m*), and the consent must be given in the lifetime of the adopting father (*n*). This involves the adoptee being an adult. Consequently there appears to be no limit of age. The initiatory rites need not be performed in the family of the adopter, and the fact that those rites, including the *upanâyana*, have already been performed in the natural family is no obstacle (*o*). Even marriage can be no obstacle, for it is stated by *Keshuba Misra* in treating of this species of adoption that a man may even adopt his own father (*p*).

No restrictions on choice.

§ 184. The great distinction between this species of adoption and the *dattaka*, appears to be that the fiction of a new birth into the adoptive family, with the limitations

(*h*) Suth. Syn. 663, 674; 3 Dig. 276; 2 Stra. H. L. 202: note to *Mt. Sutputtee v. Indramund Jha*, 2 S. D. 173 (221); *Mâdhaviya*, § 32.

(*i*) 1 W. MacN. 97.

(*k*) Manu, ix. § 169.

(*l*) *Mitâksharâ*, i. 11, § 17.

(*m*) Suth. Syn. 673; *Baudhâyana*, ii. 2, 14; 2 W. MacN. 196.

(*n*) *Mt. Sutputtee v. Indramund Jha*, 2 S. D. 173 (221); *Durgopal Singh v. Roopun Singh*, 6 S. D. 271 (340); *Luchman Lall v. Mohun Lall*, 16 W. R. 179.

(*o*) 2 Stra. H. L. 204; 2 W. MacN. 196; *Mt. Shibo Koerce v. Jugun Singh*, 4 Wym. 121; 8 W. R. 155.

(*p*) 1 W. MacN. 76; *Chowdree Permessur v. Hunooman Dut*, 6 S. D. 192 (235); *Ooman Dut v. Kunhia Singh*, 3 S. D. 145 (192).

consequent upon that fiction, do not exist. A *Kritrima* son “does not lose his claim to his own family, nor assume the surname of his adoptive father; he merely performs obsequies, and takes the inheritance” (*q*). Hence any person may be adopted who is of the same tribe as his adopter, even a father as above stated, or a brother. In one case, from the Mithilâ district, it was stated by the Pandits and held by the Court that an adoption of an elder brother by the younger was invalid (*r*). But Mr. MacNaghten points out that the authorities relied upon in that case related exclusively to the *dattaka* form. A daughter’s son may be adopted, and so may the son of a sister (*s*). For the same reason, the prohibition against adopting an only or an eldest son does not apply to a *Kritrima* adoption (*t*). It has been held in the case last cited, that where a brother’s son exists, no other can be adopted. But the opinion of the pandits was principally founded upon texts applying to the *dattaka* form, and which, with reference to that form, have been long since held to be no longer in force. It is probable, therefore, that they would be held inapplicable to the *Kritrima* form, which is so much laxer in its rules.

§ 185. As regards succession, the *Kritrima* son loses no rights of inheritance in his natural family. He becomes the son of two fathers to this extent, that he takes the inheritance of his adoptive father, but not of that father’s father, or other collateral relations, nor of the wife of his adoptive father, or her relations (*u*). Nor do his sons, &c., take any interest in the property of the adoptive father, the relationship between adopter and adoptee being limited to the contracting parties themselves, and not extending further on either side (*x*).

Results of adoption.

(*q*) 3 Dig. 276, n.; 1 W. MacN. 76.

(*r*) *Runjeet Singh v. Obhye Narain Singh*, 2 S. D. 245 (315). See 1 W. MacN. 76, n.

(*s*) *Ooman Dut v. Kunhia Singh*, 3 S. D. 144 (192); *Chowdree Permessur v. Hunooman Dut*, 6 S. D. 192 (235).

(*t*) *Ooman Dut v. Kunhia Singh*, 3 S. D. (197); 2 W. MacN. 197, where however the opinion of the pandits was based upon the fact that the adopter was the uncle of the adoptee.

(*u*) See note to *Srinath Serma v. Radhakaunt*, 1 S. D. 15 (19); 1 W. MacN. 76; *Mt. Deepoo v. Gowreeshunker*, 3 S. D. 307 (410); *Sreenarain Rai v. Bhya Jha*, 2 S. D. 23 (29, 34); *Mt. Shibo Koeree v. Jugun Singh*, 8 W. R. 155.

(*x*) *Juswant Singh v. Doolee Chund*, 25 W. R. 255.

Female may
adopt to herself.

§ 186. It has already been stated that in Mithilâ a woman cannot adopt to her husband, after his death, whether she has obtained his permission or not. But she is at liberty to do in Mithilâ, what she can do nowhere else, viz., adopt a son to herself, and this she may do either during her husband's life, or after his death. And husband and wife may jointly adopt a son, or each may adopt separately. "If a woman appoint an adopted son, he stands in the relation to her of a son, offers to her funeral oblations, and is heir to her estate; but he does not become the adopted son of her husband, nor offer to him funeral oblations, nor succeed to his property. If a husband and wife jointly appoint an adopted son, he stands in the relation of son to both, and is heir to the estate of both. If the husband appoint one, and the wife another adopted son, they stand in the relation of sons to each of them respectively, and do not perform the ceremony of offering funeral oblations, nor succeed to the estate of the husband and wife jointly" (y).

Ceremonies.

§ 187. No ceremonies or sacrifices are necessary to the validity of a *Kritrima* adoption. "The form to be observed is this. At an auspicious time, the adopter of a son having bathed, addressing the person to be adopted, who has also bathed, and to whom he has given some acceptable chattel, says, "Be my son." He replies, "I am become thy son." The giving of some chattel to him arises merely from custom. It is not necessary to the adoption. The consent of both parties is the only requisite; and a set form of speech is not essential" (z).

Similar form
practised in
Jaffna.

It is a curious thing that this form of adoption, which now only exists in Mithilâ, is almost identical in its leading features with that at present practised in Jaffna. There is the same absence of religious ceremonies, the same absence of any assumed new birth, and the same right of adoption both by husband and wife, followed by the same results of

(y) Futwah of pandits, *Sree Narain v. Bhya Jha*, 2 S. D. 23 (29, 34); 1 W. MacN. 101; *Collector of Tirhoot v. Hurreepershad*, 7 W. R. 500; *Mt. Shibo Koeree v. Jugun Singh*, 8 W. R. 155.

(z) *Rudradhara*, cited note to *Mitâksharâ*, i. 11, § 17; 1 W. MacN. 98; *Kullean Singh v. Kirpa Singh*, 1 S. D. 9 (11); *Durgopal Singh v. Roopun Singh*, 6 S. D. 271 (340).

heirship only to the adopter (a). The explanation given by Mr. MacNaghten (§ 181) may account for the survival of the *Kritrima* adoption, but does not explain its origin. It seems plain that both the Mithilâ and the Ceylon form arose from purely secular motives, and existed anterior to and independent of Brâhmanical theories. The growth of these put the *Kritrima* form out of fashion. But the similar type continued to flourish in Ceylon, where no such influence prevailed. An enquiry into the usages of the Tamil races in Southern India would probably disclose the existence of analogous customs.

(a) Thesawaleme, ii.

CHAPTER VI.

FAMILY RELATIONS.

Minority and Guardianship.

Period of
minority.

§ 188. MINORITY under Hindu law terminates at the age of sixteen. There was, however, a difference of opinion as to whether this age was attained at the beginning or at the end of the sixteenth year. The Hindu writers seem to take the former view (*a*), and this was always held to be the law in Bengal (*b*). The latter limit is stated to be the rule in Mithilâ and Benares, and was followed in Southern India and apparently in Bombay (*c*). Different periods were also fixed for special purposes by statutes, which it does not come within the scope of this work to discuss. These variances will soon lose all importance in consequence of Act IX. of 1875, which lays down as a general rule for all persons domiciled in British India or the Allied States, that where a guardian has been appointed by a Court of Justice, or where the Court of Wards has assumed jurisdiction, minority terminates at the completion of the twenty-first year; in all other cases, at the completion of the eighteenth year. But the Act is not to affect any person in respect of marriage, dower, divorce or adoption.

§ 189. GUARDIANSHIP.—The Hindu law vests the guardianship of the minor in the sovereign as *parens patriæ*. Of course this duty is delegated to the child's relations. Of these the father, and next to him the mother, is his natural

(a) 1 Dig. 293; 2 Dig. 115; Mitâksharâ on Loans, cited V. Darp., 770; Dâya Bhâga, iii. 1, § 17, note; Dattaka Mimâṃsâ, iv. § 47.

(b) 1. W. MacN. 103; 2 W. MacN. 220, 288, note; *Callichurn v. Bhuggobutty*, 10 B. L. R. 231; *Mothoor Mohun v. Surendro Narain*, 1 Calc. 108.

(c) W. MacN. *ubi sup.*; 1 Stra. H. L. 72; 2 Stra. H. L. 76, 77; *Lachman Das v. Rupchand*, 5 S. D. 114 (136); *Shivji Hasani v. Datu Marji*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 281, 290.

guardian. In default of her, or if she is unfit to exercise the trust, his nearest male kinsmen should be appointed, the paternal kindred having the preference over the maternal (*d*). Of course in an undivided family, governed by Mitâksharâ law, the management of the whole property, including the minor's share, would necessarily be vested in the nearest male, and not in the mother. It would be otherwise where the family was divided (*e*). But this would not interfere with her right to the custody of the child itself (*f*). A mother loses her right by a second marriage (*g*), and a father loses his right by giving his son in adoption (*h*). And of course any guardian, however appointed, may be removed for proper cause (*i*). Little or nothing is to be found on the subject of guardianship in works on Hindu law. The matter is principally regulated by statute (*j*).

Order of guardianship.

§ 190. The right of the guardian to the possession of the infant is an absolute right, of which he cannot be deprived, even by the desire of the minor himself, except upon sufficient grounds. In the case of parents, especially, it is obvious that the custody of their child is a matter of greater moment to them than the custody of any article of property. Cases, however, have frequently occurred in the Indian Courts, where the right of a parent to recover his child has been contested, on the ground that the parent had changed his religion, and was therefore no longer a fit guardian for

Right of guardian to custody of minor.

(*d*) Mann, viii. § 27, ix. § 146, 190, 191; 3 Dig. 542—544; F. MacN. 25; 1 Stra. H. L. 71; 2 Stra. H. L. 72—75; Mad. Dec. of 1859, 100; 1 W. MacN. 103; *Moodoo Krishna Naik v. Tondavaroy*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, 105; *Mt. Muhtaboo v. Gunesh Lal*, S. D. of 1854, 329. As to the claim of the step-mother, see *Lukmee v. Umurchund*, 2 Bor. 144; *Ram Bunsee Koonwaree v. Soobh Koonwaree*, 7 W. R. 321; *Baee Sheo v. Ruttonjee*, Morris, Pt. I. 103.

(*e*) *Alimelammal v. Arunachelam*, 3 Mad., H. C. 69; *Bissonauth Dutt v. Doorqapersad*, 2 M. Dig., 49. But she can sue on his behalf if the proper guardian refuses to do so, *Mokrund Deb. v. Ranees Bissessuree*, S. D. of 1853, 159.

(*f*) *Kooldeep Narain v. Rajbunsee*, S. D. of 1847, 557.

(*g*) *Baee Sheo v. Ruttonjee*, Morris, Pt. I. 103.

(*h*) *Lakshmibai v. Shridar Vasudev*, 3 Bomb., L. R. 1.

(*i*) *Alimelammal v. Arunachelam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 69; *Mt. Gourmonee v. Mt. Bamasoonderee*, S. D. of 1860, i. 532; *Skinner v. Orde*, 14 M. I. A., 309; *Kanahi v. Biddya*, 1 All., 549; *Abasi v. Dunne*, 1 All., 598.

(*j*) See Ct. of Wards Acts. Beng. Reg. XXVI of 1793, LII of 1803, VI of 1822; Mad. Reg. V of 1804; Act XX of 1864; Bengal Act, IV of 1870. Minors not under Court of Wards, Acts XL of 1858, IV of 1872 Education and marriage of minors, Acts XXVI of 1854, XXI of 1855, XIV of 1858. *Ram Bunsee Koonwaree v. Soobh Koonwaree*, 7 W. R. 321. See as to procedure, Act IX of 1861; Guardian and Ward, Act XIII of 1874.

Change of religion by parent;

his child; or that the child had changed its religion, and was no longer willing to live with its parent. On the former point it has been decided, that the fact that a father has changed his religion, whether the change be one to Christianity or from Christianity, is of itself no reason for depriving him of the custody of his children. It would be different of course if the change were attended with circumstances of immorality, which showed that his home was no longer fit for the residence of the child (*k*). But the case of a change of religion by the mother might be different. The religion of the father settles the law which governs himself, his family and his property. "From the very necessity of the case, a child in India, under ordinary circumstances, must be presumed to have his father's religion, and his corresponding civil and social *status*; and it is, therefore, ordinarily, and in the absence of controlling circumstances, the duty of a guardian to train his infant ward in such religion." Therefore, where a change of religion on the part of the mother would have the effect of changing the religion, and therefore the legal *status* of the infant, the Court would remove her from her position as guardian. And the asserted wish of the minor, also, to change his religion, in conformity with that of the mother, would not necessarily alter the case; unless perhaps where the advanced age of the minor, and the settled character of his religious convictions would render it improper or impossible to attempt to restore him to his former position (*l*).

by infant.

§ 191. The case of a child voluntarily leaving its parents has frequently occurred where there has been a conversion to Christianity. It seems at one time to have been the practice of the Courts of Calcutta and Madras to allow the child to exercise his discretion, if upon a personal examination they were satisfied that his wish was to remain away from his parents, and that he was capable of exercising an intelligent judgment upon the point. The contrary rule was for the first time laid down by the Supreme Court of Bombay, when they directed a boy of twelve years old to be

(*k*) *Reg. v. Bezonji*, Perry, O. C. 91.

(*l*) *Skinner v. Orde*, 14 M. I. A. 309.

given back to his father, and refused to examine him as to his capacity and knowledge of the Christian religion, or as to his wish to remain with his Christian instructors (*m*). This course was approved by Mr. Justice Patteson, to whom Sir Erskine Perry referred the point (*n*). That decision was followed in the Supreme Court of Madras in 1858, in the case of *Culloor Narrainsawmy* (*o*), when Sir C. Rawlinson and Sir A. Bittleston decided that a Hindu youth of the age of fourteen, who had gone to the Scottish missionaries, should be given up to his father, though he had become a convert to Christianity, and was most anxious to remain with his new protectors. A similar decision was given in Calcutta in 1863, by Sir M. Wells, where a boy of fifteen years and two months had voluntarily gone to reside with the missionaries (*p*). It may also be observed, that it is a criminal offence under the Indian Penal Code, to entice from the keeping of its lawful guardian a male minor under the age of fourteen, or a female minor under the age of sixteen (*q*).

§ 192. The mother is the natural guardian of an illegitimate child. But where she has allowed the child to be separated from her and brought up by the father, or by persons appointed by him, the Court will not allow her to enforce her rights. Especially if the result would be disadvantageous to the child, by depriving it of the advantages of a higher mode of life and education (*r*).

Illegitimate child.

§ 193. Contracts made by a minor himself are at the utmost voidable, not void. If made for any necessary purpose they are absolutely binding upon him, and they can always be ratified by him after he attains full age, either expressly, or impliedly by acquiescence, and taking the benefit of them (*s*). He will also be bound by the act of his guardian, when *bonâ fide* and for his interest, and when it

Effect of contracts.

(*m*) *Reg. v. Nesbitt, Perry*, O. C. 103.

(*n*) *Ib.* p. 109.

(*o*) Not reported. I was counsel for the missionaries in the case.—J. D. M.

(*p*) *Re Himnauth Bose*, 1 Hyde, 111.

(*q*) I. P. C. ss. 361, 363. The consent or wish of the minor is quite immaterial. See cases cited *sub loco*. Mayne's Commentaries on the Indian Penal Code.

(*r*) *Reg. v. Fletcher, Perry*, O. C. 109; *Mittibhai v. Kottekarati*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 154.

(*s*) *Rennie v. Gunganarain*, 3 W. R. 10; *Boiddonath v. Ramkishore*, 13 W. R. 166; *Doorga Churn v. Ram Narain Doss*, *ib.* 172.

is such as the infant might reasonably and prudently have done for himself, if he had been of full age (*t*). But not where the act appears not to have been for his benefit (*u*), unless he has ratified it on reaching his majority (*x*). And where the act is done by a person who is not his guardian, but who is the manager of the estate in which he has an interest, he will equally be bound, if under the circumstances the step taken was necessary, proper, or prudent (*y*).

Where, however, the act is done by a person in possession of property, who does not profess to be acting on behalf of the minor, but who claims to be independent owner, and to be acting on his own behalf, it will not bind the infant who is really entitled (*z*).

Of course the objection to an act on the ground of minority must be taken by the minor himself. Those who deal with him are always bound, though he may not be (*a*).

Where a minor on coming of age sues to set a sale aside, he is bound to refund the purchase money, when his estate has benefited by it, or to hold the property charged with the amount of debt from which it has been freed by the sale (*b*).

§ 194. A minor, who is properly represented in a suit, will be bound by its result, whether that result is arrived at by

Equities on
setting aside.

Decrees.

(*t*) *Cauminany Bungaroo v. Perumma*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 99; *Temmakal v. Subbamal*, 2 Mad. H. C. 47; *Kumurooddeen v. Shaik Bhadoo*, 11 W. R. 134; *Makbul Ali v. Srimati Masnad*, 3 B. L. R. A. C. 54; *Goorooopersad v. Muddun Mohun*, S. D. of 1856, 980; *Soonder Narain v. Bennad Ram*, 4 Calc. 76. See as to a guardian's power of leasing, *Nubokishen v. Kaleepersad*, S. D. of 1859, 607; *Gopeenath v. Ramjeeewun*, ib. 913; *Beebee Sowlutoonisa v. Robt Savi*, ib. 1575. See also as to contracts requiring statutory sanction, *Debi Dutt v. Subodra*, 2 Calc. 283.

(*u*) *Sambasivien v. Kristnien*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 252; *Nawab Syud Ashru-fooddeen v. Mt. Shama Soonderee*, S. D. of 1853, 531; *Nubokishen v. Kaleepersad*, S. D. of 1859, 607; *Lallah Bunseedhur v. Koonwur Bindeseree*, 10 M. I. A. 454. A guardian may pay debts barred by statute if fairly due, *Chowdhry Chuttersal v. Government*, 3 W. R. 57.

(*x*) *Chetty Colum v. Rajah Rungasawmy*, 8 M. I. A. 319; *Golaub Koonwarree v. Eshan Chunder*, ib. 447, 11 W. R. 134; *Bhobanny Persaud v. Teerpura-churn*, 2 M. Dig. 100; *Mongooney v. Goorooopersad*, ib. 188. A ratification will be of no effect, if the property has already passed away from the person who ratifies the transaction, *Lallah Rawuth Lall v. Chadee Thuthara*, S. D. of 1858, 312.

(*y*) *Hunooman Persad v. Mt. Babooee*, 6 M. I. A. 393.

(*z*) *Bahur Ali v. Sookheea Bibi*, 13 W. R. 63.

(*a*) *Canaka v. Cottavappah*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 184.

(*b*) *Mt. Bukshun v. Mt. Doolhin*, 12 W. R. 337; *Paran Chunder v. Karunamayri Dasi*, 7 B. L. R. 90; *Bai Kesar v. Bai Ganga*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 31; *Mirza Pana v. Saiad Sadik*, 7 N. W. P. 201; *Kwarji v. Moti Haridas*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 234; and see *Godgeppa v. Apaji Jivanras*, 3 Bomb., L. R. 237.

hostile decree or by compromise (c). But the Court will not make a decree by consent without ascertaining whether it is for the benefit of the infant (d). And the mere fact that a proceeding was partly conducted through the intervention of a Civil Court—as for instance a decree on a foreclosure—does not give it any additional validity against a minor, unless he is properly made a party to the proceeding at a stage when he can question it on its merits (e). Of course a decree can always be set aside if obtained by fraud (f).

A guardian is liable to be sued by his ward for damages arising from his fraudulent or illegal acts (g). For debts due by the ward, the guardian of course is only liable to the extent of the funds which have reached his hands (h).

Suits against
guardian.

(c) *Venkataswarasawmy v. Krishnasomayajulu*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 243; *Tarinee Churn v. Watson*, 12 W. R. 414; *Modhoo Soodun v. Prithee Bullub*, 16 W. R. 231; *Jungee Lall v. Sham Lall Misser*, 20 W. R. 120; *Lekraj Roy v. Mahtab Chand*, 14 M. I. A. 393. And the guardian may equally compromise claims before suit, *Gopeenath v. Ramjeeewun*, S. D. of 1859, 913.

(d) *Ram Churn v. Mungul Sircar*, 16 W. R. 232.

(e) *Buzrung Sahoy v. Mt. Mautora Chowdhrair*, 22 W. R. 119.

(f) *Lekraj Roy v. Mahtab Chand*, 14 M. I. A. 393.

(g) *Issur Chunder v. Ragab Indernarain*, S. D. of 1860, i. 349.

(h) *Sheikh Azeemooddeen v. Moonshee Athur Ali*, 3 W. R. 137.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY LAW OF PROPERTY.

Misleading effect
of English
analogies.

§ 195. THE student who wishes to understand the Hindu system of property, must begin by freeing his mind from all previous notions drawn from English law. They would not only be useless, but misleading. In England ownership, as a rule, is single, independent, and unrestricted. It may be joint, but the presumption will be to the contrary. It may be restricted, but only in special instances, and under special provisions. In India, on the contrary, joint ownership is the rule, and will be presumed to exist in each individual case until the contrary is proved. If an individual holds property in severalty, it will in the next generation relapse into a state of joint tenancy. Absolute, unrestricted ownership, such as enables the owner to do anything he likes with his property, is the exception. The father is restrained by his sons, the brother by his brothers, the woman by her successors. If property is free in the hands of its acquirer, it will resume its fetters in the hands of his heirs. Individual property is the rule in the West. Corporate property is the rule in the East. And yet, although the difference between the two systems can now only be expressed in terms of direct antithesis, it is pretty certain that both had a common origin (a). But in India the past and the present are continuous. In England they are separated by a wide gulf. Of the bridge by which they were formerly connected, a few planks, only visible to the eye of the antiquarian, are all that now remain.

§ 196. Three forms of the corporate system of property exist in India ; the Patriarchal Family, the Joint Family, and

(a) See Maine, *Village Communities*, 82.

the Village Community. The two latter, in one shape or other, may be said to prevail throughout the length and breadth of India. The last still flourishes in the north-west of Hindostan. It is traceable, though dying out, in Southern India. It has disappeared, though we may be sure it formerly existed, in Bengal and the upper part of the peninsula. In some regions, such as among the Hill tribes and the Nairs of the Western Coast, it appears never to have arisen at all. The analogy between the two latter forms is complete. The Village Community is a corporate body, of which the members are families. The Joint Family is a corporate body, of which the members are individuals. The process of change which has been undergone both by Village Communities and Families is similar, and the causes of this change are generally identical. It seems a tempting generalisation to lay down, that one must have sprung from the other; that the Village Community has grown out of the extension of the Joint Family, or that the Joint Family has resulted from the dissolving of the larger body into its component parts. But such a generalisation would be unsafe. The same causes have no doubt produced the village system and the family system. But it is certain that there are many villages which have never sprung from the same family, and many places where the family system has shown no tendency to grow into the village system.

Different forms
of corporate
property.

§ 197. The village system of India may be studied with most advantage in the Punjâb, as it is there that we find it in its most perfect, as well as in its transitional forms. It presents three marked phases, which exactly correspond to the changes in an undivided family. The closest form of union is that which is known as the *Communal Zemindari* village. Under this system "the land is so held that all the village co-sharers have each their proportionate share in it as common property, without any possession of or title to distinct portions of it; and the measure of each proprietor's interest is his share as fixed by the customary law of inheritance. The rents paid by the cultivators are thrown into a common stock, with all other profits from the village lands, and after deduction of the expenses the balance

Village communities in the
Punjâb.



Punjab.

is divided among the proprietors according to their shares" (b). This corresponds to the undivided family in its purest state. The second stage is called the *pattidari* village. In it the holdings are all in severalty, and each sharer manages his own portion of land. But the extent of the share is determined by ancestral right, and is capable of being modified from time to time upon this principle (c). This corresponds to the state of an undivided family in Bengal. The transitional stage between joint holdings and holdings in severalty is to be found in the system of re-distribution, which is still practised in the Pathan communities of Peshawur. According to that practice, the holdings were originally allotted to the individual families on the principle of strict equality. But as time introduced inequalities with reference to the numbers settled on each holding, a periodical transfer and re-distribution of holdings took place (d). This practice naturally dies out, as the sense of individual property strengthens, and as the habit of dealing with the shares by mortgage and sale is introduced. The share of each family then becomes its own. The third and final stage is known as the *bhaiachari* village. It agrees with the *pattidari* form, inasmuch as each owner holds his share in severalty. But it differs from it, inasmuch as the extent of the holding is strictly defined by the amount actually held in possession. All reference to ancestral right has disappeared, and no change in the number of the co-sharers can entitle any member to have his share enlarged. His rights have become absolute instead of relative, and have ceased to be measured by any reference to the extent of the whole village, and the numbers of those by whom it is held (e). This is exactly the state of a family after its members have come to a partition.

§ 198. The same causes which have broken up the joint family of Bengal have led to the disappearance of the village

(b) Punjab Customs, 105, 161. This stage is the same as that described by Sir H. S. Maine, as existing in Serbia and the adjoining districts. *Ancient Law*, 267. See Evans, *Bosnia*, 44.

(c) Punjab Customs, 106, 156.

(d) Punjab Customs, 125, 170. See Corresponding Customs, Maine, *Anc. Law*, 267; *Village Communities*, 81; Lavaleyc, ch. vi.; Wallace, *Russia*, i. 189.

(e) Punjab Customs, 106, 161.

system in that province. In Western and Central India, the wars and devastations of Muhammedans, Mahrattas, and Pindarries swept away the village institutions, as well as almost every other form of ancient proprietary right (*f*). But in Southern India, among the Tamil races, we find traces of similar communities (*g*). The village landholders are there represented by a class known as *Mîrâsidârs*, the extent and nature of whose rights are far from being clearly ascertained. It is certain, however, that they have a preferential right over other inhabitants to be accepted as tenants by the Government, a right which they do not even lose by neglecting to avail themselves of it at each fresh settlement (*h*). They are jointly entitled to receive certain fees and perquisites from the occupying tenants, and to share in the common lands (*i*). Some villages are even at the present time held in shares by a body of proprietors who claim to represent the original owners, and a practice of exchanging and re-distributing these shares is known still to exist, though it is fast dying out (*j*). In Madras the Government claim is made upon each occupant separately, not upon the whole village, as in the Punjâb; but the contrary usage must once have existed. Sir G. Campbell mentions an instance in which the Government supposed that they were receiving their revenue as usual, from the individual roys. It was ascertained that the village had really taken the matter into its own hands, and regularly re-distributed the burthen according to ancient practice among the several occupants (*k*).

§ 199. The co-sharers in many of these village communities are persons who are actually descended from a common ancestor. In many other cases they profess a common

Tradition of
common descent.

(*f*) See speech of Sir J. Lawrence, cited Punjâb Customs, 138.

(*g*) Elphinstone, India, 66, 249.

(*h*) Mad. Dec. of 1850, 121, of 1859, 101; 5th Report House Commons, cited 1 N. C. 320. See *Fakir Muhammed v. Tirumala Charriar*, 1 Mad. L. R. 205.

(*i*) *Moottoopermal v. Tondaven*, 1 Stra. N. C. 300; Mad. Dec. of 1852, 38, of 1854, 141, of 1862, 50. In the Punjâb this right may be retained by a co-sharer, though he has ceased to possess any land in the village. Punjâb Customs, 108.

(*j*) Madura Manual, Pt. V. 12; 2 Mad. H. C. 1, 5, 17; 4 Mad. H. C. 159; 3 Mad. Rev. Reg. 189.

(*k*) Land Tenures, Cobden Club, 197.

descent, for which there is probably no foundation (*l*). In some cases it is quite certain there can be no common descent, as they are of different castes, or even of different religions (*m*). But it is well known that in India the mere fact of association produces a belief in a common origin, unless there are circumstances which make such an identity plainly impossible. I have often heard a witness say of another man that he was his relation, and then upon cross-examination explain that he was of the same caste. The ideas presented themselves to his mind, not as two but as one. An instance is given by Sir H. S. Maine, in which some missionaries planted in villages converts collected from all sorts of different regions. They rapidly adopted the language and habits of a brotherhood, and will no doubt before long frame a pedigree to account for their juxtaposition (*n*). It is evident that an actual community of descent must depend upon mere accident. If a family settled in an unoccupied district, it might spread out till it formed one, or several village communities. The same result might happen if a family became sufficiently powerful to turn out its neighbours, or reduce them to submission. Where the country was more thickly peopled, several families would have to unite from the first for mutual protection, and would in time begin to account in the usual way for the fact that they found themselves united in interest. Families which settled or sprung up in regions that were fully occupied, never could form new communities based on the possession of land.

Joint families
do not always
expand into
village com-
munities.

§ 200. As it is certain that village communities have not always sprung from a single joint family, so it is equally certain that a joint family does not necessarily tend to expand into a village community. For instance, the Nairs, whose domestic system presents the most perfect form of the joint family now existing, never have formed village com-

(*l*) Punjab Customs, 136, 164; Maine, Vill. Com. 12, 175; Early Instit. 1, 64; Lyall on Formation of Clans and Castes, Fortnightly Review, Jan. 1, 1877; Hunter's Orissa, ii. 72; McLennan, 214. It must be remembered that the co-sharers of a village are a much smaller body than the inhabitants.

(*m*) Maine, Vill. Com. 176; Mad. Dec. of 1862, 50.

(*n*) Maine, Early Instit. 238.

munities. Each *tarwâd* lives in its own mansion, nestling among its palm trees, and surrounded by its rice lands, but apart from and independent of its neighbours. This arises from the peculiar structure of the family, which traces its origin in each generation to females, who live on in the same ancestral house, and not to males, who would naturally radiate from it, as separate but kindred branches of the same tree. In a lesser degree the same thing may be said of the Kandhs. Among them the patriarchal family is found in its sternest type. But though the families live together in septs and tribes, tracing from a common ancestor, and acknowledging a common head, and although their hamlets have a deceptive similarity to a Hindu village, they want the one element of union—there is no unity of authority, and no community of rights. Each family holds its property in severalty, and never held it in any other way. It is absolute owner of the land it occupies, and ceases to have any interest in the land which it abandons. The chieftain has influence, but not authority. The families live in proximity, but not in cohesion. They are not branches of one tree, but a collection of twigs (o). This, again, seems to arise from the circumstances of their position. With them land is so abundant, and their wants so few, that it has never been necessary to restrain the individual for the benefit of the community. Where the common stock is limited, it is necessary to make rule for its enjoyment; but where all can have as much as they want, no one would take the trouble to make rules, and no one would submit to them if made.

§ 201. The same causes which have prevented the Joint Family from extending into the Village Community, appear also to check the Patriarchal Family at the stage at which it would naturally expand into the Joint Family. For instance, among the Kandhs, at the death of the father, the family union, which previously was absolute, appears to dissolve. The property is divided, and each son sets up for himself as a new head of a family (p). Among the Hill

Arrested expansion of the Patriarchal Family.

(o) Hunter's Orissa, ii. 72, 204.

(p) Hunter's Orissa, ii. 79.

Tribes of the Nîlgiris, and among the Kols, the same practice prevails (*q*).

§ 202. It would appear, therefore, that in tracing society backwards to its cradle, one of the earliest, if not the earliest unit, is the Patriarchal Family. In the language of Sir H. S. Maine (*r*), "Thus all the branches of human society may or may not have been developed from joint families which arose out of an original patriarchal cell; but, wherever the Joint Family is an institution of an Áryan race (*s*), we see it springing from such a cell, and, when it dissolves, we see it dissolving into a number of such cells."

Its origin and nature.

§ 203. The Patriarchal Family may be defined as "a group of natural or adoptive descendants held together by subjection to the eldest living ascendant, father, grandfather, or great-grandfather. Whatever be the formal prescription of the law, the head of such a group is always in practice despotic, and he is the object of a respect, if not always of an affection, which is probably seated deeper than any positive institution" (*t*). The absolute authority over his family possessed by the Roman father in virtue of this position is well known. Exactly a similar authority was once possessed by the Hindu father. Manu says, "Three persons, a wife, a son, and a slave, are declared by law to have in general no wealth exclusively their own; the wealth which they may earn is regularly acquired for the man to whom they belong" (*u*). And so Nârada says of a son, "he is of age and independent, in case his parents be dead; during their lifetime he is dependent, even though he be grown old" (*v*). But this doctrine was not peculiar to the Áryan races. Among the Kandhs it is stated that "in each family the absolute authority rests with the house father. Thus the sons have no property during their father's lifetime; and all the male children, with their wives and des-

(*q*) Breeks, *Primitive Tribes of the Nîlgiris*, 9, 39, 42, 68.

(*r*) *Early Institutions*, 118.

(*s*) This qualification was no doubt intended to exclude cases where the joint family is of a polyandrous type.

(*t*) *Ibid.* 116; *Ancient Law*, 133. Here seems to be the origin of the great Hindu canon of inheritance, that the funeral cake stops at the third in descent. See *post*, § 438a.

(*u*) Manu, viii. § 416; Nârada, v. § 39; Sancha & Lich., 2 Dig. 526.

(*v*) Nârada, iii. § 38. See too Sancha & Lich., 2 Dig. 533.

cendants, continue to share the father's meal, prepared by the common mother" (x). An indication of a similar usage still exists among the Tamil inhabitants of Jaffna, where all acquisitions made by the sons while unmarried, except mere presents given to them, fall into the common stock (y). As soon as they are married, it would appear that each becomes the head of a new family.

§ 204. The transition from the Patriarchal to the Joint Family arises (where it does arise) at the death of the common ancestor, or head of the house. If the family choose to continue united, the eldest son would be the natural head (z). But it is evident that his position would be very different from that of the deceased patriarch. The former was head of the family by a natural authority. The latter can only be so by a delegated authority. He is *primus* but *inter pares*. Therefore, in the first place, he is head by choice, or by natural selection, and not by right. The eldest is the most natural, but not the necessary head, and he may be set aside in favour of one who is better suited for the post. Hence Nârada says (a), "Let the eldest brother, by consent, support the rest like a father; or let a younger brother, who is capable, do so; the prosperity of the family depends on ability." And so the old Toda, when asked which of his sons would take his place, replied, "the wisest (b)." In the next place the extent of his authority is altered. He is no longer looked upon as the owner of the property, but as its manager (c). He may be an autocrat as regards his own wife and children, but as regards collaterals he is no more than the president of a republic. Even as regards his own descendants, it is evident that his power will tend gradually to become weaker. The property which he manages, is property in which they have the same interest as the other members of the family. The restrictions which fetter him in dealing with the property as against collaterals,

Origin of Joint Family.

Difference between Patriarchal and Joint Family.

(x) Hunter's Orissa, ii. 72.

(y) Thesawaleme, iv. 5.

(z) Manu, ix. § 105.

(a) xiii. § 5.

(b) Brecks, Primitive Tribes, 9.

(c) See Maine, Early Institutions, 116.

will by degrees attach to his dealings with it as against his own children. They also will come to look upon him as the manager, and not as the father. The apparent conflict between many of the texts of Hindu sages as to the authority of the father, may, perhaps, be traced to this source. Those which refer to the father as head of the patriarchal family will attribute to him higher powers than those which refer to him as head of a joint family.

Not in necessary
sequence.

Polyandrous
origin of family
system.

§ 205. We have already seen (*d*) that the step from the patriarchal to the joint family is one which, in some states of society, never takes place. Conversely the joint family is by no means necessarily preceded by the patriarchal family. For instance the Nair system absolutely excludes the patriarchal idea. Its essence is the tracing of kinship through females, and not through males. Mr. McLennan considers that the Nair system was the necessary antecedent of the patriarchal form of relationship. According to his view, the loose relation between the sexes in early ages first settled into polyandry. Where it existed in its rudest shape, in which a woman associated with men unrelated to each other, the only family group that could be formed would be that of the mother and her children, and the children of such of them as were females. This is the Nair type, and still exists in the Canarese and Malabar *tarwâds*. Here kinship by females was alone possible. When the woman passed into the possession of several males of the same family, the circle of possible paternity became narrowed. The wife then lived in the house of her husbands, and the children were born in their home as well as hers. They could be identified as the offspring of some one of the husbands, though not with certainty as the offspring of any particular one. This was the first dawning of kinship through males. It is the species of polyandry that exists in Thibet, Ceylon, among the Todas on the Nilghiri Hills and elsewhere. Where the woman was the wife of several brothers, the eldest, to whom she was first married, would naturally have a special claim upon her, and could be ascer-

tained to be the father of the children who were first born. By degrees this special claim would change into an exclusive claim, and so a system of absolute monandry would arise, and the patriarchal family become possible (*e*). Substantially the same view is put forward by Dr. Mayr in a less elaborate form (*f*). Now as the tenure of property always moulds itself to the family relations of the persons by whom it is held, the result would be that property would first be held by the entire tribe, next by those who claimed relationship to a common mother, and next by a family, tracing either from several males, or from a single male. According to this theory, the patriarchal family would always be evolved from a wider joint family, instead of the reverse.

§ 206. It seems to me that the fallacy of these speculations consists in assuming that a cause, which is sufficient to produce a particular result, is the cause which has invariably produced that result. It is certain that polyandry, and the female-group system of property, has a tendency to change into monandry, and individual property. We have seen the process going on among the Kandyan chiefs of Ceylon, and the Todas evince the same tendency (*g*). I have been told that fidelity to a single husband is becoming common among the Nair women of the better class. And it is certain that the Malabar *tarwâds* would long since have broken up into families, each headed by a male, if our Courts had allowed them to do so. It is equally certain that the patriarchal family is capable of expanding, and has a tendency to expand into the wider joint family, for we see instances of it every day. Every Hindu who starts with nothing, and makes a self-acquired fortune, is a pure and irresponsible patriarch. But we know that in a couple of generations his offspring have ramified into a joint family,

Theory discussed.

(*e*) McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History*. See further discussion on the same subject in Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, I. chaps. iii.—viii.; *Fortnightly Review*, May and June, 1877; and in Morgan's "*Ancient Society*."

(*f*) Ind. Erbrecht, pp. 72—76. He appears not to have been acquainted with Mr. McLennan's work on *Primitive Marriage*, and bases his theory on the cruder speculations of Sir J. Lubbock, as to the early prevalence of what the latter terms "*Communal Marriage*." Lubbock, *Origin of Civilisation*, chap. iii.

(*g*) McLennan, 195; Brecks, *Primitive Tribes*, 9.

exactly, to use Mr. McLennan's simile, like a banian tree which has started with a single shoot. It may possibly be that the village communities and undivided families of Southern India have originated among polyandrous tribes, for we have evidence of the recent existence of polyandry among the Drâviḍian races (§ 58). But it is difficult to attribute to the same cause the existence of similar organisations among the Áryan races of Northern India. We know that the village and family system in these races must be of enormous antiquity, because we find an exactly similar system existing among the kindred races which branched off from them before history commenced. It is impossible to say that the ancestors of the common race were not polyandrous, but it is almost certain that their descendants neither are nor have been so during any period known to tradition (§ 59). It is difficult therefore to imagine that polyandry could have been the necessary antecedent of a system of property, which is able to flourish in every part of the world under exactly opposite conditions.

§ 207. The following suggestions seem to me capable of accounting for all the known facts, and are equally applicable to any families, however formed.

Tribal rights.

I assume that an original tribe, finding themselves in any tract of country, would consider that tract to be the property of the tribe; that is to say, they would consider that the tribe, as a body, had a right to the enjoyment of the whole of the tract, in the sense of excluding any similar body from a similar enjoyment (*h*). It would never occur to them that any individual member of the tribe had a right to exclude any other member permanently from any part of it; they would hunt over it and graze over it in common. When they came to cultivate the land, each would cultivate the portion he required. The produce would go to support himself and his family, but the land would be the common property of all. So long as the ratio between population and land was such as to enable any one to occupy as much as he liked, and when the land was exhausted,

(*h*) This is the sort of right which the Red Indians are always asserting against the Americans.

to throw it up and exhaust another patch, the community would have no motive for restraining him in so doing. His rights would appear to be unlimited, merely because no one had an interest in limiting them. The same cause would produce the continual break-up of families. They might cling together for mutual protection; but as soon as each fraction grew strong enough to protect itself, it would wander apart to seek fresh pasturage for its flocks, or virgin soil for its crops (*i*). This is the condition of the hill tribes of India at present. But it would be different when population began to press upon subsistence, either from the increase of the original tribe, or from the closing in of adjoining tribes. Then the unlimited use of the land by one would be a limitation of its use by another. An individual or a family might be sufficiently strong to enforce an exclusive possession, but every one could not encroach upon every one else. The community would assert its right to put each of its members upon an allowance. That allowance would be apportioned on principles of equality, giving to each family according to its wants. The mode of apportionment might be, either by throwing all the produce into a common stock, and then re-distributing it, as in a communal Zemindari village; or by allotting separate portions of land to each family, with reference to the number of its members, as in a *pattidari* village. In the latter case equality would probably be from time to time restored by an exchange and re-distribution of shares, as in the Russian Mir, and the Pathan communities. In time this periodical dislocation of society would cease: it would tend to die out when the members began to improve their own shares. In the Punjâb it is found that community has died out in spots whose cultivation depends entirely upon wells (*k*). Gradually the shares would come to be looked upon as private property. The idea of community would be limited to a joint interest in the village waste, and a joint responsibility for the claims of Government. This is the *bhaiacharry* village. If Government chose to settle with each individual instead of

Growth of
restrictions.

Private pro-
perty.

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(*i*) See the separation of Abram and Lot, in Genesis, xiii.

(*k*) Punjâb Customs, 128.

with the village, the members would be exactly in the same position as the *Mirâsidârs* of Southern India.

Progress of the family.

§ 208. During the whole of this time the family system might be going through a series of analogous changes. The same causes which led to the compression or disruption of the tribe would lead to the compression or disruption of the family. The same feeling of common ownership which caused the tribe to look upon the whole district as their joint property, would cause the family to look upon their allotment in the same way. The same sense of individual property which led to the break-up of the village into shares, would lead to the break-up of the family by partition. But as the motives for union are stronger in a family than in a village, the union of the family would be more durable than that of the village. And this, in fact, we find to be the case.

Early Hindu writers.

§ 209. The ancient Hindu writers give us little information as to the earlier stages of the law of property. So far as property consisted in land, they found a system in force which had probably existed long before their ancestors entered the country, and they make little mention of it, unless upon points as to which they witnessed, or were attempting innovations. No allusion to the village coparcenary is found in any passage that I have met. *Manu* refers to the common pasturage, and to the mode of settling boundary disputes between villages, but seems to speak of a state of things when property was already held in severalty (*l*). But we do find scattered texts which evidence the continuance of the village system, by showing that the rights of a family in their property were limited by the rights of others outside the family. For instance, as long as the land held by a family was only portioned out by the community for their use, it is evident that they could not dispose of it to a stranger without the consent of the general body. This is probably the real import of two anonymous texts cited in the *Mitâksharâ*: "Land passes by six formalities; by consent of townsmen, of kinsmen, of neighbours and of heirs, and by gift of gold and water." "In regard to

Limitation of family rights.

(*l*) *Manu*, viii. § 237—265.

the immovable estate, sale is not allowed; it may be mortgaged by consent of parties interested" (*m*). This would also explain the text of Vṛihaspati, cited Mitāksharâ i., 1, § 30. "Separated kinsmen, as those who are unseparated, are equal in respect of immovables, for one has not power over the whole, to make a gift, sale or mortgage." It is evident that partition would put an end to further rights within the family, but would not affect the rights which the divided members, in common with the rest of the village sharers, might possess as ultimate reversioners. Consequently they would retain the right to forbid acts by which that reversion might be affected. And this is the law in the Punjâb to the present day (*n*). Perhaps the text of Uçanas, who states that land was "indivisible among kinsmen even to the thousandth degree" (*o*), may be referred to the same cause.

§ 210. A further extension of the rights of co-sharers took place, when each sub-division was saleable, but the members of the community had a right of pre-emption, so as to keep the land within their own body. This right exists, and is recognized at present by statute, in the Punjâb (*p*). The existence of an exactly similar right among the Tamil inhabitants of Northern Ceylon is recorded in the Thesawaleme (*q*).

Right or pre-emption.

§ 211. With the exception of these scattered and doubtful hints, the Sanskrit writers take up the history of the family at a period when it had become an independent unit, unrestrained by any rights external to itself. As regards the rights of the members, *inter se*, their statements are very meagre. The *status* of the undivided family was, apparently, too familiar to every one to require discussion. They only notice those new conditions which were destined to

(*m*) Mitāksharâ, i. 1, § 31, 32; see too Vivâda Chintâmani, p. 309. It will be observed that here, as in other cases, Vijñānēsvara gives the texts an explanation which makes them harmonize with the law as known to him. But it is more probable that they were once literal statements of a law which in his time had ceased to exist. See Mayr, 24, 30.

(*n*) Punjâb Customs, 73.

(*o*) Mitāksharâ, i. 4, 4 26. See Mayr, 31.

(*p*) Punjâb Customs, 186; Act XII of 1878, s. 2.

(*q*) Thesawaleme, vii. § 1, 2. The right of pre-emption is there said to extend to the vendor's "heirs or partners, and to such of his neighbours whose grounds are adjacent to his land, and who might have the same in mortgage, should they have been mortgaged."

Origin of self-
acquired
property.

bring about the dissolution of the family itself. These were *Self-Acquisition*, *Partition* and *Alienation*.

§ 212. SELF-ACQUIRED PROPERTY in the earliest state of Indian society did not exist (*r*). So where the family was of the purely patriarchal type, the whole of the property was owned by the father, and all acquisitions made by the members of the family were made for him, and fell into the common stock (*s*). When the joint family arose, self-acquisition became possible, but was gradual in its rise. While the family lived together in a single house, supported by the produce of the common land, there could be no room for separate acquisition. The labour of all went to the common stock, and if one possessed any special aptitude for making clothes or implements of husbandry, his skill was exercised for the common benefit, and was rewarded by an interchange of similar good offices, or by the improvement of the family property, and the increased comfort of the family home. But as civilisation advanced, and commerce arose, new modes of industry were discovered, which had no application to the joint property. As the family had only a claim upon its members for their assistance in the cultivation of the land, and the ordinary labours of the household, they could not compel the exertion of any special form of skill, unless it was to meet with a special reward. It was recognized that a member, who chose to abandon his claims upon the family property, might do so, and thenceforward pursue his own special occupation for his own exclusive profit (*t*). But it might be for the advantage of all to keep the specially gifted member in the community by allowing him to retain for himself the fruits of his special industry. On the other hand, an injury would be done to the family, if, while living at its expense, he did not contribute his fair share of labour to its support, or if he used any appreciable portion of the family property for the purpose of producing that which he afterwards claimed as exclusively his own. The doctrine of self-acquired property sprung from a desire to reconcile these conflicting interests.

(*r*) See Mayr, 28.

(*s*) Manu, viii. § 416; *ante*, § 203.

(*t*) Manu, ix. § 207; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 116; Mayr, 29, 43.

§ 213. The earliest forms of self-acquisition appear to have been the gains of science and valour, peculiar to the Brâhman and the Kshatriya. Wealth acquired with a wife, gifts from relations or friends, and ancestral property, lost to the family, and recovered by the independent exertions of a single member, were also included in the list; and Manu laid down the general rule, "What a brother has acquired by labour or skill, without using the patrimony, he shall not give up without his assent, for it was gained by his own exertion" (*u*). But we can see that self-acquisitions were at first not favoured, and that Manu's formula was rather strained against the acquirer than for him. Kâtyâyana and Vṛihaspati refuse to recognize the gains of science as self-acquisition, when they were earned by means of instruction imparted at the expense of the family (*x*); and Vyâsa similarly limits the gains of valour, if they were obtained with supplies from the common estate, such as a vehicle, a weapon, or the like, only allowing the acquirer to retain a double share (*y*). It would also seem doubtful whether the acquirer was originally entitled to the exclusive possession of the whole of his acquisitions. Vâsishta says, "If any of the brothers has gained something by his own efforts, he receives a double share." This text is supposed by Dr. Mayr to mark a stage at which the only benefit obtained by the acquirer was a right to retain, on partition, an extra portion of the fruits of his special industry (*z*). If that be the correct explanation, the text of Vyâsa just quoted shows a further step in advance. He restricts the rights of the acquirer, only in cases where assistance, however slight, has been obtained from the family funds; as where a warrior has won spoil in battle, by using the family sword or chariot. In later times all trace of such a restriction had passed away. The text of Vâsishta had lost

Its earliest forms.

Not favoured.

(*u*) Manu, ix. § 206—209; Gautama, xxviii. § 27, 28; Nârada, xiii. § 6, 10, 11; Vyâsa, 3 Dig. 333.

(*x*) 3 Dig. 333, 340.

(*y*) 3 Dig. 71; V. May, iv. 7, § 12.

(*z*) Vâsishta, xvii. § 26; Mayr., 29, 30; Dr. Burnell's translation of Varadrâjah (p. 31) renders it, "If any of them have self-acquired property, let him take two shares." The text seems to be similarly interpreted by Jîmûta Vâhana. Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 41. See *post*, 260.

its original meaning, and was explained as extending Mann's rule, not as restricting it; and as establishing that a member of a family, who made use of the patrimony to obtain special gains, was entitled to a double portion as his reward (*a*). This is evidently opposed both to the spirit and the letter of the ancient law. It has, however, come to be the present rule in Bengal, as we shall see hereafter (§ 260).

Right over self-acquisitions.

§ 214. It does not appear that an acquirer had from the first an absolute property in his acquisition, to the extent of disposing of it in any way he thought fit. Originally the benefit which he derived from a special acquisition seems to have come to him in the form of a special share at the time of partition (*b*). While the family remained undivided, he would be entitled to the exclusive use of his separate gains. If he died undivided, they would probably fall into the common stock. Probably he was only allowed to alienate, where such alienation was the proper mode of enjoying the use of the property. This would account for the distinction which is drawn between self-acquired movables and immovables. The right to alienate the former is universally admitted by the commentators, but the *Mitāksharā* cites with approval a text, which states that, "Though immovables or bipeds have been acquired by a man himself, a gift or sale of them should not be made without convening all the sons" (*c*). According to the existing Malabar law, a member of a *tarwād* may make separate acquisitions, and dispose of them as he pleases during his life; but anything that remains undisposed of at his death becomes part of the family property (*d*). According to the *Thesawaleme* a member of an undivided family appears to have more power of disposal over self-acquired than he has over ancestral property, but not an absolute power (*e*).

(*a*) *Mitāksharā*, i. 4, § 29; *Dāya Bhāga*, vi. 1, § 24—29.

(*b*) *Vishnu*, xvii. § 1; *Yājñavalkya*, ii. 118—120, and texts referred to at note (*u*).

(*c*) *Mitāksharā*, i. 1, § 27. This text is ascribed by Mr. Colebrooke to Vyāsa. In the *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, p. 309, it is attributed to Prakāsha, while Jagannātha quotes it as from *Yājñavalkya*. 2 Dig. 110. How far this is still the law in Southern India appears unsettled. See *post*, § 298.

(*d*) *Kallati Kunju v. Palat Erracha Menon*, 2 Mad. H. C. 162.

(*e*) *Thesawaleme*, ii. § 1.

§ 215. PARTITION of family property, so far as that property consisted of land, could not arise until the land possessed by each family had come to be considered the absolute property of the family, free from all claims upon it by the community. Nor would there be any very strong reason for partition, as long as the bulk of the property consisted of land. It would furnish a better means of subsistence to the members when it remained in a mass, than when it was broken up into fragments. The influence of the head of the family, and the strong spirit of union which is characteristic of Eastern races, would tend to preserve the family coparcenary, long after the looser village bond had been dissolved. In Malabar and Canara, at the present day, no right of partition exists. In some cases, where the family has become very numerous, and owns property in different districts, the different branches have split into distinct *tarwâds*, and become permanently separated in estate. But this can only be done by common consent. No one member, nor even all but one, can enforce a division upon any who object (*f*). The text of Uçanas, already quoted (*g*), which forbids the division of land among kinsmen, seems to evidence a time when the Hindu joint family was as indivisible as the Malabar *tarwâd* (*h*).

Originally unknown.

§ 216. Partition would begin to be desired, when self-acquisitions became common and secure. A man who found that he was earning wealth more rapidly than the other members of his family, would naturally desire to get rid of their claims upon his industry, and to transmit his fortune entire to his own descendants. This is one of the commonest motives which brings about divisions at present. But the family feeling against partition is so strong (*i*), since what one gains all the others lose, that it is probable the usage would have had a painful struggle for existence,

Its origin.

Stimulated by Brâhmanism.

(*f*) *Munda Chetty v. Timmaju Hensu*, 1 Mad. H. C. 380; *Timmappa v. Mahalinga*, 4 Mad. H. C. 28.

(*g*) *Ante*, § 209.

(*h*) See Mayr, 31, 43.

(*i*) I have been assured that even in Bengal, where the family tie is so loose, no one can enforce a division except at the cost of all natural love and harmony. In Madras I have invariably found that a family feud was either the cause or the consequence of a suit for partition.

if it had not been supported by the strongest external influence, viz., that of the Brâhmans. This support it certainly had. As long as a family remained joint, all its religious ceremonies were performed by the head. But as soon as it broke up, a multiplication of ceremonies took place, in exact ratio to the number of fractions into which it was resolved. Hence a proportionate increase of employment and emolument for the Brâhmans. The Sanskrit writers are perfectly frank in advocating partition on this very ground. Manu says (*k*), "Either let them live together, or if they desire religious rites, let them live apart; since religious duties are multiplied in separate houses, their separation is therefore legal,"—to which Kullûka adds, in a gloss, "*and even laudable!*" And so Gautama says (*l*), "If a division takes place, more spiritual merit is acquired."

Its development.

§ 217. It was, however, by very slow steps that the right to a partition reached its present form. At first it is possible that a member who insisted on leaving the family for his own purposes, went out with only a nominal share, or such an amount as the other members were willing to part with (*m*). This is the more probable, since, so long as the family retained its Patriarchal form, the son could certainly not have compelled his father to give him a share at all, or any larger portion than he chose. The doctrine that property was by birth—in the sense that each son was the equal of his father—had then no existence. The son was a mere appendage to his father, and had no rights of property as opposed to him (*n*). The family was then in the same condition as a Malabar *tarwâd* is now. There the property is vested in the head of the family, not merely as agent or principal partner, but as almost an absolute ruler. The right of the other members is only a right to be maintained in the family house, so long as that house is capable of holding them. The scale of expenditure to be adopted, and its distribution among the different members, is a matter wholly within the discretion of the *karnaven*.

Malabar
tarwâd.

Originally sub-
ject to consent
of father.

(*k*) ix. § 111.

(*l*) xxviii, § 4.

(*m*) *Ante*, § 212, note (*t*).

(*n*) Manu, viii. § 416; *ante*, § 203.

No junior member can claim an account, or call for an appropriation to himself of any special share of the income. Partition, as we have already seen, can never be demanded (*o*). It is quite certain that in the earlier period of Hindu law, no son could compel his father to come to a partition with him. Manu speaks only of a division after the death of the father, and says expressly that the brothers have no power over the property while the parents live. Kullūka Bhaṭṭa adds in a gloss, "unless the father chooses to distribute it" (*p*). This was no doubt added because the actual or mythical Manu did himself divide his property among his sons, or was alleged by the Veda to have done so, and the fact is put forward by the sages as an authority for such a division (*q*). The consent of the father is also stated by Baudhāyana, Gautama, and Devala to be indispensable to a partition of ancestral property (*r*), and Sancha and Lichita even make his consent necessary where the sons desire to have a partition of their own self-acquired property (*s*). Growth of son's right. Subsequently a partition was allowed even without the father's wish, if he was old, disturbed in intellect, or diseased; that is, if he was no longer fit to exercise his paternal authority (*t*). A final step was taken when it was acknowledged that father and son had equal ownership in ancestral property; that is to say, when the patriarchal family had changed into the joint family (*u*). It then became the rule that the sons could require a division of the ancestral property, but not of the acquired property (*v*). The joint family then ceased to be a corporation with per-

(*o*) *Kunigaratu v. Arrangaden*, 2 Mad. H. C. 12; *Subbu Hegadi v. Tongu*, 4 Mad. H. C. 196; *ante*, § 215, note (*f*).

(*p*) Manu, ix. § 104; see also Vāsishta, xvii. § 23—29. A text of Manu (ix. § 209) is, however, cited in the *Mitāksharā* (i. 6, § 11) as evidencing the right of sons to compel a partition of the ancestral property held by their father. The translation given by Sir W. Jones (*brethren* for *sons*) is incorrect, see 2 W. & B. xxiv. The text itself refers, not to partition, but to self-acquisition. It contemplates the continuance of the coparcenary, not its dissolution, and points out what property falls into the common stock, and what does not.

(*q*) A'pastamba, xiv. § 11; Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 1.

(*r*) Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 4; Gautama, xxviii. § 2; Devala, 2 Dig. 522.

(*s*) 2 Dig. 526, 533.

(*t*) Çankha, or Hārīta, cited *Mitāksharā*, i. 2, § 7.

(*u*) See *ante*, § 204; *post*, § 226.

(*v*) Vyāsa, 3 Dig. 35; Viṣṇu, xvii. § 1, 2.

petual succession, and became a mere partnership, terminable at will.

Partition deferred till death of mother.

§ 218. The above sequence of rights is perfectly intelligible. It is more difficult to account for the early limitations upon partition with reference to the mother. There seems to be no doubt that originally the right of brothers to divide the family estate was deferred till after the death, not only of the father, but of the mother (*x*). Gautama, Nârada and Vrihaspati allow of partition during the mother's life, but make it an essential that she should have become incapable of child bearing, or that cohabitation on the part of the father should have ceased (*y*). The latter limitation, which is also the later, may be explained as intended to protect the interests of after-born children (*z*). It would operate as forbidding partition until after possibility of further issue was extinct. But why extend the prohibition to the death of the mother when the father was already dead? It might be suggested that this prohibition was necessary at a time when a widow was authorised to raise up issue by a relation. But it seems to me that it may evidence a time when the widow had a life estate in her husband's property, even though he left issue. It has often been said that the ground on which a widow's right of inheritance is rested, viz., that she is the surviving half of her husband, would be a reason for her inheriting before her sons, instead of after them (*a*). Now according to the Thesawaleme this is actually the rule. Where the father dies leaving children, the mother takes all the property, and gives the daughters their dowry, but the sons may not demand anything as long as she lives (*b*). An indication of such a state of things having once existed may perhaps be found in the text of Sancha and Lichita (*c*), which, after forbidding partition without the father's consent, goes on to say, "Sons who have parents living are not independent, nor even after the death

(*x*) Manu, ix. § 104; Sancha & Lichita, 2 Dig. 533; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 117; Mitāksharâ, i. 3, § 1—3; Dâya Bhâga, iii. § 1.

(*y*) Gautama, xxviii. § 2; Nârada, xiii. § 3; 3 Dig. 48.

(*z*) Dâya Bhâga, i. § 45.

(*a*) See 3 Dig. 79.

(*b*) Thesawaleme, i. § 9.

(*c*) 2 Dig. 533.

of their father while their mother lives." And similarly Nārada makes the dependence of sons, however old, last during the life of both parents; and, in default of the father, places the authority of the mother before that of her first-born (*d*).

§ 219. When we come to the commentators who wrote at a time when all these restrictions had passed away, we find that the above passages had lost all meaning for them. But no Hindu lawyer admits that any sacred text can conflict with existing law. As usual, they attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable, either by forced explanations, or by simple collocation of contradictory passages, without any effort to explain their bearing upon each other. The Mitāksharā, in dealing with the time of partition, quotes several of the texts just cited, as establishing that partition, during the father's lifetime, can only be made in three cases, viz., first, when he himself desires it; or secondly, even against his will, when both parents are incapable of producing issue; or thirdly, when the father is addicted to vice, or afflicted with mental or bodily disease (*e*). And so he quotes, without any objection or explanation, the passage which directs partition to take place after the death of both parents (*f*). But in treating of the rights of father and son to ancestral property, he explains these texts as referring only to the self-acquired property of the father, and concludes that "while the mother is capable of bearing more sons, and the father retains his worldly affections, and does not desire partition, a distribution of the grandfather's estate does nevertheless take place by the will of the son" (*g*).

Restrictions
become obsolete.

Mitāksharā.

§ 220. The *Smṛiti Chandrikā* explains the passage of Manu, ix. § 104, which defers partition till after the death of both parents, as meaning that the property of each parent

Smṛiti Chan-
drikā.

(*d*) Nārada, iii. § 38, 40: "He is of age and independent in case his parents be dead. During their lifetime he is dependent, even though he be grown old. Of the two parents the father has the greater authority, since the seed is worth more than the field; in default of the father, the mother; in her default, the first-born. These are never subject to any control from dependent persons; they are fully entitled to give orders, and make gifts or sales."

(*e*) Mitāksharā, i. 2, § 7.

(*f*) Mitāksharā, i. 3, § 1, 2.

(*g*) Mitāksharā, i. 6, § 5, 7, 8, 11. To the same effect is the Mayūkha, iv. 4, § 1—4.

can only be divided after his or her decease (*h*). But the result of an involved disquisition as to the right of sons to exact partition during the father's life, appears to be, that as long as the father is competent to beget children, and to manage the family affairs, the sons have not such independent power as entitles them to compel him to proceed to a division (*i*).

It will be seen hereafter (*k*), that, until quite lately, the point was still open to discussion in Southern India.

Bengal writers.

§ 221. The writers of the Bengal school had to perform an exactly opposite feat of interpretation to that accomplished by those of the Benares school. The latter considered the sons to be joint owners with their father, and had to explain away the texts which restricted or delayed their right to a partition. The former considered that the father was the exclusive owner, and had to explain away the other texts which authorised a partition. The mode in which they attained this result will be found in the first chapter of the *Dâya Bhâga*. *Jîmûta Vâhana* takes up all the texts which assert that sons cannot compel a partition during the father's lifetime, as supporting his view that property in the sons arises not by birth, but by the death of the father. Consequently, even in the case of ancestral property, there can be no partition during the father's life, without his consent. Upon his death, whether actual or civil, the property of the sons arises for the first time, and with it their right to a division (*l*).

Rights of
mother.

§ 222. The condition that the mother should be past child-bearing, is taken by the writers of this school to be a limitation upon the father's power to make a partition, where the property is ancestral, on the ground, that if the ancestral estate were divided while the mother was still productive, the after-born children would be deprived of subsistence (*m*). They also interpret literally the prohibition against partition even after the father's death, while the mother is still alive,

(*h*) *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, i. § 12—17.

(*i*) *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, i. § 19—23, 28—38.

(*k*) *Post*, § 395.

(*l*) *Dâya Bhâga*, i. § 11—31, 38—44, 50 ; ii. § 8.

(*m*) *Dâya Bhâga*, i. § 45 ; *D. K. S.* vi. 1.

and repudiate the explanation that this prohibition relates to the separate property of the mother (n). Later commentators, however, do not allow that the rule is still in force, or get out of it, by the usual Bengal formula, that it is morally wrong but legally valid. In practice neither the mother's death nor consent is now required (o).

§ 223. The result of this long history is, that the right to a partition at any time, between co-sharers, is now admitted universally. But the writers of the Bengal school do not allow that sons are co-sharers with their father. Elsewhere all members of a joint family are considered to be co-sharers, whether they are related to each other lineally or collaterally. Results.

§ 224. THE RIGHT OF ALIENATION of course proceeds *pari passu* with the development of property from its communal to its individual form. As each new phase of property arose, there was a transitional period before it absolutely escaped from the fetters which had ceased to be properly binding upon it. We have already seen reason to believe, that there was a time when the shares of separated kinsmen in land were not absolutely at their own disposal. But all such restrictions had passed away before the time of Nârada (p). So it would appear that at first sons were not at liberty to dispose of their own self-acquired property, and it is still an unsettled point whether, under Mitâksharâ law, a father has absolute control over self-acquired land (q). Conversely, a relic of the supreme power of the father, as head of the family, may, perhaps, be found in his asserted right to dispose of ancestral moveables at pleasure (r). Possibly the absolute obligation of the sons to pay his debts may be traceable to the same source (s). Development of right to alienate. # # 62 ✓

§ 225. As regards joint property, it necessarily followed, from the very essence of the idea, that no one owner could dispose of that which belonged to others along with himself, unless with their consent, or under circumstances of neces- Joint property.

(n) Dâya Bhâga, iii. § 1—11 ; D. K. S. vii. § 1. See F. MacN. 37, 57 ; 1 W. MacN. 49.

(o) 3 Dig. 78 ; 1 W. MacN. 50.

(p) Ante, § 209 ; Nârada, xiii. § 43.

(q) Ante, § 203 ; post, § 230.

(r) Post, § 228.

(s) Post, § 274.

sity, from which their assent might be implied (*t*). But a most important difference of opinion arose, as to who were joint owners in property, and as to the power of disposal each joint owner had over his own share.

Power of
father.

The former point arose with reference to the position of a father in regard to his sons. Where the joint family was an enlargement of the patriarchal family, the power of the head would necessarily be different, according as he was looked upon as the father of his children, or merely as the manager of a partnership (*u*). The texts which had their origin in the former stage of the family, would necessarily ascribe to him wider powers than those which originated in its later stage. For instance, when Nârada says, "women, sons, slaves, and attendants are dependent; but the head of a family is subject to no control in disposing of his hereditary property" (*x*);—he is evidently quoting a text which had once been true of the father as a domestic despot, but which had long since ceased to be true of him as the head of a joint family. At each stage of the transition, the original writers, who spoke merely with reference to the facts which were under their own eyes, would speak clearly and unhesitatingly. When the era of commentators arrived, who had to weave a consistent theory out of conflicting texts, all of which they were bound to consider as equally holy and equally true, controversy would begin. Those who wished to diminish the father's authority would quote the later texts. Those who wished to enlarge his authority would quote the earlier texts. This is exactly what took place.

Mitâksharâ.

§ 226. The author of the Mitâksharâ enters into an elaborate disquisition, as to whether property in the son arises for the first time by partition, or the death of the previous owner, or exists previously by birth (*y*). He quotes two anonymous texts, "The father is master of the gems, pearls, coral, and of all other (movable property), but neither the father nor the grandfather is of the whole immovable

(*t*) Vyâsa, 1 Dig. 455 ; 2 Dig. 189.

(*u*) *Ante*, § 204.

(*x*) Nârada, iii. § 36.

(*y*) Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 17—27.

estate;” and this other passage, “By favour of the father, clothes and ornaments are used, but immovable property may not be consumed even with the father’s indulgence” (z). He sums up his views in § 27, 28, as follows:—“Therefore it is a settled point that property in the paternal or ancestral estate is by birth, although the father have independent power in the disposal of effects other than immovables for indispensable acts of duty, and for purposes prescribed by texts of law, as gifts through affection, support of the family, relief from distress, and so forth; but he is subject to the control of his sons and the rest in regard to the immovable estate, whether acquired by himself or inherited from his father or other predecessor; since it is ordained, ‘though immovables or bipeds have been acquired by a man himself, a gift or sale of them should not be made without convening all the sons. They who are born, and they who are yet unbegotten, and they who are still in the womb, require the means of support. No gift or sale should therefore be made.’” An exception to it follows: “Even a single individual may conclude a donation, mortgage, or sale of immovable property during a season of distress, for the sake of the family, and especially for pious purposes.”

Property is by birth.

§ 227. The opinion of Vijñaneśvara that sons had by birth an equal ownership with the father in respect of ancestral immovable property, is followed by all writers except those of the Bengal school, and is now quite beyond dispute (a). But upon the other points, viz., as to the extent of the father’s power over ancestral movables, and the limitation upon his power over self-acquired land, there is no such harmony, and his own views appear to have been in a state of flux upon the subject.

§ 228. As regards movables, it is evident that the head of the family, whether in his capacity as father or as mana-

Father’s power over movables.

(z) Mitāksharā, § 21. The former of these texts is cited by Jīmūta Vāhana, ii. § 22, as from Yājñavalkya, but cannot be found in the existing text. It is also opposed to Yājñavalkya, ii. § 121, quoted *post*, § 229.

(a) Smṛiti Chandrikā, viii. § 17—20; Mādhaviya, § 15, 16; Varadrājah, pp. 4—6; V. May., iv. 1, § 3, 4; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi 309. As to whether land purchased with ancestral movable property possesses incidents of ancestral immovable, see § 248. n.

Father's power
over movables.

ger, must necessarily have a very large control over them. Money and articles produced to be sold or bartered, he must have the power to dispose of, in the ordinary management of the property. Clothes, jewels, and the like he would apportion to and reclaim from the various members of the family at his discretion. Household utensils, and implements of trade or husbandry, he would buy, exchange and dispose of as the occasion arose. Now, in early times, movable property would be limited to such articles. Even at the present day, not one Hindu family in a thousand possesses any other species of chattel property. The very instance adduced by the text—gems, pearls and corals—points to things over which the father would necessarily have a special control. And the *Mayûkha* says of this very text, “it means the father’s independence only in the wearing and other use of ear-rings, rings, &c., but not so far as gift or other alienation. Neither is it with a view to the cessation of the cause of his ownership in the production of a son. This very meaning is made manifest also by the text noticing only gems and such things as are not injured by use” (b).

§ 229. In another portion of the *Mitâksharâ* (c) he quotes without comment a text of *Yājñavalkya* (ii. § 121). “The ownership of father and son is the same in land which was acquired by the grandfather, or in a *corrody* (or settled income), or in chattels which belonged to him.” This evidently contradicts the idea that the father had any absolute power of disposal over ancestral movables. Further, although in ch. i. 1, § 24, he lays down the general principle, that “the father has power, under the same text, to give away such effects, though acquired by his father;” in § 27, already quoted, he seems to limit this power to the right of disposing of movables for such necessary or suitable purposes as would come within the ordinary powers of the head of a household. It is evidently one thing to bestow a rupee on a beggar, and another to give away the balance at the bank. Lastly, it

(b) *V. May.*, iv. 1, § 5.

(c) *Mitâksharâ*, i. 5, § 3.

is important to observe, that none of the later writers in Southern India, who follow the Mitāksharâ, make any such distinction. They quote the above text of Yājñavalkya, and a similar one from Vṛihaspati, which place ancestral movables and immovables on exactly the same footing as regards the son's right by birth (*d*).

§ 230. As regards the second point, viz., the restriction upon a father's power to dispose of his own self-acquired land, Vijñaneśvara is equally at variance with himself. He asserts the restriction in the most unqualified terms in the passage already quoted. He denies it in equally unqualified terms in a later passage (*e*). "The grandson has a right of prohibition, if his unseparated father is making a donation, or a sale of effects inherited from the grandfather; but he has no right of interference, if the effects were acquired by the father. On the contrary, he must acquiesce, because he is dependent. Consequently the difference is this: although he have a right by birth in his father's and in his grandfather's property, still, since he is dependent on his father in regard to the paternal estate, and since the father has a predominant interest, as it was acquired by himself, the son must acquiesce in the father's disposal of his own acquired property; but since both have indiscriminately a right in the grandfather's estate, the son has a power of interdiction." And in the next paragraph he quotes Manu, ix. § 209, as showing that the father was not compelled to share self-acquired wealth with his sons. The Smṛiti Chandrikâ is explicit on the point that as regards all self-acquired property, without any exception, the father has independent power, to the extent of giving it away at his pleasure, or enjoying it himself, and he cites texts of Kātyāyana and Vṛihaspati, which state this to be the rule, as plainly as can be (*f*). On the other hand, the Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, which always maintains the rights of the family

Over self-acquired land.

Mitāksharâ.

Smṛiti Chandrikâ.

Vivāda Chintāmaṇi.

(*d*) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, viii. § 17—20; Mādhavîya, § 15, 16; Varadrâjah, 4—9. See the modern decisions on this point, *post*, § 291.

(*e*) Mitāksharâ, i. 5, § 9, 10, 11.

(*f*) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, viii. § 22—23. Mr. Colebrooke refers to both the Smṛiti Chandrikâ and the Mādhavîya as laying down exactly the opposite doctrine (2 Stra. H. L. 439, 441). I suppose the passages he refers to are in portions which have not yet been translated. I have been unable to find them.

in their strictest form, cites with approval the same text as that which is relied on by the Mitāksharâ, as restraining the dealings of the father with self-acquired land (*g*). But in an earlier chapter the author states the unqualified rule, "Self-acquired property can be given by its owner at his pleasure" (p. 76), and at p. 229 he repeats the same rule expressly as to a father.

Explanation of
text.

§ 231. It is probable that the text which is relied on both by the Mitāksharâ and the Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, was one of a class of texts which forbid the alienation by a man of his entire property, so as to leave his family destitute (*h*). To our ideas such a prohibition would seem to be unnecessary. But in India, where generosity to Brâhmins was inculcated as the first of virtues, and a life of asceticism and mendicancy was pointed out as the fitting termination of a virtuous career (*i*), a direction that a man should be just before he was generous, might not have been uncalled for. Whether the direction, so far as it regards self-acquired land, is anything more than a moral precept, is a point which cannot be treated as absolutely settled even now (*k*).

The Dâya
Bhâga.

232. When we come to Jîmûta Vâhana, we find that by a little dexterous juggling he arrives at exactly the opposite conclusion from that of the Mitāksharâ, out of precisely the same premises. He too discusses the origin of a son's right in property, with the same elaborate subtlety as Vijñaneśvara, and announces as the result of the texts, "That sons have not a right of ownership in the wealth of the living parents, but in the estate of both when deceased" (*l*). The process he adopts is as follows. He relies on the texts of Manu and Devala which prohibit partition in the father's lifetime, without his consent, as showing that the father was the absolute owner of the property (*m*). He then grapples with the text—"The father is master of the gems, pearls and corals, and of all other (movable property), but neither the father nor the grandfather is so of the whole immovable

(*g*) Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, 309.

(*h*) See Nârada, iv. § 4, 5; Vṛihaspati, 2 Dig. 98; Daksha, 2 Dig. 110.

(*i*) Manu, vi.

(*k*) See the modern decisions, *post*, § 298.

(*l*) Dâya Bhâga, i. § 30; D. K. S. vi. § 18,

(*m*) Dâya Bhâga, i. § 12-34.

estate." From this he argues, 1. That since the grandfather is mentioned, the text must relate to his effects, viz., to ancestral property; 2. That with regard to such property, "the father has authority to make a gift or other similar disposition of all effects other than land, &c., but not of immovables, a corrody, and chattels (*i.e.*, slaves);" 3. That even as to land "the prohibition is not against a donation or other transfer of a small part not incompatible with the support of the family. For the insertion of the word 'whole' would be unmeaning (if the gift of even a small part were forbidden)." The other texts which forbid a transfer by one of several joint owners, or even the sale by a father of his own self-acquisitions without the consent of his sons, he dismisses with the simple remark, that they only show a moral offence: "Therefore, since it is denied that a gift or sale should be made, the precept is infringed by making one. But the gift or transfer is not null, for a fact cannot be altered by a hundred texts" (*n*).

§ 233. Of course this argument is opposed to the first principles both of historical and legal reasoning. Manu and Devala forbid compulsory partition at the will of the sons, in order to prevent the family corporation being broken up. The whole object of the prohibition would be frustrated if the father was at liberty to dispose of its property, in whole or in part, at his own pleasure. Not a suggestion is to be found in any writer earlier than Jîmûta Vâhana himself, that he possessed such a right, or anything approaching to it (*o*). Every authority which speaks of alienation, directly negatives the existence of such a right. It might with equal logic be argued, that the karnaven of a Malabar tarwâd at the present day is absolute owner of its property, because none of the junior members can demand a share. The indissoluble character of the property would furnish as complete an answer to the former claim as it does to the latter. As to the suggestion that what is forbidden may still be valid, Mr. W. MacNaghten points out,

Attempt to
reconcile usage
with texts.

(*n*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 22—30; D. K. S. vi. § 18—20.

(*o*) The only exception is the text of Nârada, cited *ante*, § 225, which, even if it is to be taken literally, plainly refers to a time anterior to that of the Joint Family.

that there is a distinction between an improper but legal mode of dealing with a man's self-acquisition, which is wholly his own, and an improper and illegal manner of dealing with ancestral land which is only shared by him with his sons. He was of opinion that, as to the former, the father could dispose of it as he liked, while as to the latter he could only dispose of his own share (*p*). But the badness of the reasoning arose from the fact that Jîmûta Vâhana considered it necessary to reconcile the usage which had sprung up in Bengal, with the letter of texts which applied to a state of things that had ceased to exist. He was the apologist of a revolution which must have been completed long before he wrote. But from his writings that revolution derived the stability due to a supposed accordance with tradition. If no law-books of a later tone than the Mitâksharâ had been in existence when our Courts were established, there can be little doubt that the conscientious logic of English judges would have refused to recognize that the revolution had ever taken place.

Suggested explanation of Bengal doctrines

§ 234. There are probably no materials in existence which would enable us to trace the causes of that change in popular feeling, and family law, which is marked by the difference between the Mitâksharâ and the Dâya Bhâga. Much was of course due to the natural progress of society. A race so full of commercial activity as the Hindus who were settled along the lower course of the Ganges, would find their growth cramped by the Procrustean bed of ancient tradition. As soon as land came to be looked on as an object of mortgage and sale, the restraints upon alienation imposed by the early law would be found insufferable. But I imagine that the Brâhmanical influence helped most strongly in the same direction. Sir H. S. Maine, while discussing a similar transition in Celtic law, says, "When this writer affirms that, under certain circumstances, a tribesman may grant or contract away tribal land, his ecclesiastical leaning constantly suggests a doubt as to his legal

(*p*) 1 W. MacN. Pref. vi. 2—15. See *per* East, C.J., 2 M. Dig. 200—204; *per* Peacock, C.J., 4 B. L. R. O. C. 78. As to the modern decisions, see *post*, § 325.

doctrine. Does he mean to lay down that the land may be parted with generally, or only that it may be alienated in favour of the Church? This difficulty of construction has an interest of its own. I am myself persuaded that the influence of the Christian Church on law has been very generally sought for in a wrong quarter, and that historians of law have too much overlooked its share in diffusing the conceptions of free contract, individual property, and testamentary succession, through the regions beyond the Roman Empire, which were peopled by communities held together by the primitive tie of consanguinity. It is generally agreed among scholars that churchmen introduced these races to wills and bequests. The Brehon tracts suggest to me at least that, along with the sacredness of bequests, they insisted upon the sacredness of contracts; and it is well known that, in the Germanic countries, their ecclesiastical societies were among the earliest and largest grantees of public or 'folk' land. The Will, the Contract, and the Separate Ownership, were in fact indispensable to the church as the donee of pious gifts" (q).

§ 235. It seems to me that every word of this passage is applicable to the effect caused by Brâhmanical influence upon Hindu law. The moral law, as promulgated by Manu, might be described as a law of gifts to Brâhmans. Every step of a man's life, from his birth to his death, required gifts to Brâhmans. Every sin which he committed might be expiated by gifts to Brâhmans. The huge endowments for religious purposes which are found in every part of India show that these precepts were not a dead letter. Every day's experience of present Indian life shows the practical belief in the efficacy of such gifts. Naturally, every rule of law which threw an impediment in their way would be swept aside as far as possible. And, when we remember that the Brâhman was the King's minister in his Cabinet, the King's judge in his Court, it is obvious that it was a mere question of the means that would be adopted to secure the end. Even the earlier writers had led the way, by mingling pious gifts with the necessary purposes which

Influence of
Brâhmans.

(q) Maine, Early Instit., 104.

would justify an alienation of family property (*r*). It was a further step to emancipate the holder of the estate from all control whatever. This was effected in Bengal by the doctrine that a father was absolute owner of the property; and by its further extension, that every collateral member held his share as tenant in common, and not as joint tenant. The favour shown to women, who are always the pets of the priesthood, by allowing them to inherit and to enforce partition in an undivided family, seems to me an additional stage in the same direction. The validity attributed to death-bed gifts for religious objects, which gradually ripened into a complete system of devise (*s*), completed the downfall of the common law of property in India.

Powerful in
Bengal.

§ 236. There can be no doubt that Brâhmanism was rampant among the law writers of Bengal. I think it can be shown that it was this influence which completely remodelled the law of inheritance in that Province, by applying tests of religious efficacy which were of absolutely modern introduction (*t*). We can easily see why this influence was more powerful in Bengal than in Southern and Western India, where the Brâhmans had never been so numerous; and than it was in the Punjâb, where Brâhmanism seems from the first to have been a failure (*u*). But it is difficult to see why a similar system should never have been developed in Benares, which is the very hot-bed of Brâhmanism. Much may, perhaps, have been due to the personal character and influence of Jîmûta Vâhana. It is supposed that the Dâya Bhâga was written under the influence of one of the Hindu sovereigns of Bengal, and perhaps even received his name, much as the great work of Tribonian came to bear the name of Justinian (*x*). It would be unphilosophical to suppose that he originated the changes we have referred to. But if he had had the acuteness to see that these changes actually had taken place, the wisdom to adopt them, and the courage to avow that adoption, it is

Personal influ-
ence of Jîmûta
Vâhana.

(*r*) Kâtyâyana, 2 Dig. 96; Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 28; Dâya Bhâga xi. 1, § 63.

(*s*) See *post*, § 337.

(*t*) See *post*, § 433, *et seq.*

(*u*) See 2 Muir, S. T. 482; *ante*, § 8.

(*x*) See Colebrooke's Introduction to the Dâya Bhâga.

obvious that a work written under such inspiration would take precisely the form of the *Dāya Bhāga*. It would be based upon the new system as a fact, while its arguments would be directed to show that the new system was the old one. Its authority would necessarily be accepted as absolute throughout the kingdom, and it would become a fresh starting point for all subsequent treatises on law. On the other hand, the Benares jurists, in consequence of the very strength of their Brāhmanism, would continue slavishly to reproduce their old law books, without caring, or daring, to consider how far they had ceased to correspond with facts; just as we find comparatively modern works discussing elaborately the twelve sorts of sons, long after any but two had ceased to be recognized. Conversely, of course, the treatises themselves, both in Bengal and Benares, would alter the current of usage, by affecting the opinion of Pandits and Judges upon any concrete case that was presented for their decision. If any writer of equal authority with *Jīmūta Vāhana* had arisen in Southern India, had represented plainly the usages which he found in force, and painted up the picture with a plausible colouring of texts, we should probably find the *Mitāksharā* as obsolete in Madras as it is in Bengal.

§ 237. When *Jīmūta Vāhana* had established to his own satisfaction that a father was the absolute owner of property, and that the sons had no right in it till his death, it would seem to follow, as a necessary consequence, that if the father chose to make a partition, he might distribute his estate among his sons exactly as he liked. But this conclusion he declined to draw. Nothing can show the artificial character of his reasoning more strongly than this fact. In the very chapter in which he lays down that the absolute ownership of the father enables him to deal with his ancestral property as he likes, he also lays down that if he chooses to distribute it, he must do so upon general principles of equality, and cannot, even for himself, reserve more than a double share (y). He affirms for one purpose the very

Power of father
to distribute.

(y) *Dāya Bhāga*, ii. § 15–20, 47, 56–82. See the whole subject discussed, *post*, § 414, 416.

ownership by birth which he denies for another. The reason probably was, that unequal distributions of a man's property during his life had not become common, and that there was no particular motive for encouraging them. The result, however, possibly was to preserve the family union in many cases in which it would otherwise have been broken up.

Interest of
coparcener in
his share.

§ 238. The second point upon which Jímûta Vâhana differed from the earlier writers, was as to the nature of the interest which each person who was admitted to be a co-sharer, had in the joint property. The point will have to be fully discussed hereafter (*z*). It is enough to say here that the Mitâksharâ, and those who follow its authority, consider that no coparcener has such an ascertained share, prior to partition, as admits of being dealt with by himself, apart from his fellow sharers (*a*). They look upon every co-sharer as having a proprietary right in the whole estate, subject to a similar right on the part of all the others. Jímûta Vâhana, on the other hand, denies the existence of such a general right, and says that their property consists in unascertained portions of the aggregate (*b*). Hence he argues that the text of Vyâsa which prohibits sale, gift or mortgage by one of several coparceners, cannot be taken literally, for each has a property consisting in the power of disposal at pleasure (*c*).

Rights of
women.

§ 239. Another feature of Bengal law which must have helped much to break up the family union, was the favour with which it regarded the rights of women. According to the Benares school, a widow could never inherit unless her husband had been a sole or a separated owner (*d*). This resulted from the nature of his interest in the property. So long as he was undivided, he had not a share but a right to obtain a share by partition. If he died without exercising this right, his interest merged, and went to enlarge the possible shares of the survivors. But according to the

(*z*) See *post*, § 327.

(*a*) See Vyâsa, 1 Dig. 455.

(*b*) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 1, § 26.

(*c*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 27; 2 Dig. 99—105, 189; D. K. S. xi.

(*d*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 1, § 30.

Dâya Bhâga, a widow inherits to an issueless husband whether he dies divided or undivided. This would have been a logical result of holding that each coparcener during his lifetime held a definite though unascertained share. But though Jîmûta Vâhana relies upon this as an answer to his opponents, he grounds the right itself upon the texts of early sages. It is probable that in this respect he may have been really reviving the old law (c). Certainly he was so in allowing the mother a right to obtain a share. But the result is, that in Bengal property falls far more frequently under female control than it does in other parts of India, and we may be certain, with proportionate advantage to the Brâhmans.

§ 240. I have now traced the changes which the law of Wills. property underwent in India, up to the time when its administration fell into English hands. I have not touched upon the subject of wills. The fruitful germ of a system of bequest can be seen in very early writers, but all the evidences of its growth are to be found in the records of the British Courts.

The succeeding chapters will be devoted to a fuller examination of this law, as it has been developed and applied by our tribunals.

(c) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 1, § 1—26; see *ante*, § 218.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE JOINT FAMILY.

Division of
subject.

§ 241. IN discussing the Joint Family or coparcenary which forms the subject of this chapter, we shall have to consider—first, who are its members ; secondly, what is coparcenary property ; thirdly, self-acquisition, and the burthen of proof when it is set up ; fourthly, the mode in which the joint property is enjoyed. The historical discussion contained in the previous chapter has shown that originally every Hindu family, and all its property, was not only joint but indivisible. This state of things ceased when partition broke up the family, and when property came to be held in severalty, either as being the share of a divided member, or as being the separate acquisition of one who was still living in a state of union. But the presumption still continues, that the members of a Hindu family are living in a state of union, unless the contrary is established. “ The strength of the presumption necessarily varies in every case. The presumption of union is stronger in the case of brothers than in the case of cousins, and the farther you go from the founder of the family, the presumption becomes weaker and weaker” (a). Even where separation, either of person or estate, is established, it can never be more than temporary. The man who has severed his union with his brothers, if he has children, becomes the head of a new joint family, composed of himself and his children, and their issue. And so property, which was the self-acquisition of the first owner, as soon as it descends to his heirs, becomes their joint property, with all the incidents of that condition (b).

Presumption of
union.

(a) *Moro Visvanath v. Ganesh Vithal*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 444, 468 ; 2 Stra. H. L. 347.

(b) *Ram Narain Singh v. Pertum Singh*, 20 W. R. 189.

§ 242. It is evident that there can be no limit to the number of persons of whom a Hindu joint family consists, or to the remoteness of their descent from the common ancestor, and consequently to the distance of their relationship from each other. But the Hindu coparcenary, properly so called, constitutes a much narrower body. When we speak of a Hindu joint family as constituting a coparcenary, we refer not to the entire number of persons who can trace from a common ancestor, and amongst whom no partition has ever taken place; we include only those persons who, by virtue of relationship, have the right to enjoy and hold the joint property, to restrain the acts of each other in respect of it, to burthen it with their debts, and at their pleasure to enforce its partition. Outside this body there is a fringe of persons who possess inferior rights such as that of maintenance, or who may, under certain contingencies, hope to enter into the coparcenary. In defining the coparcenary, therefore, it will be necessary to anticipate a little some matters which have to be more fully treated of hereafter.

§ 243. The Hindu lawyers always treat partition and inheritance as part of the same subject (c). The reason of this is that the normal state of the property with which they have to deal is to be joint property, and that they can only explain the amount of interest which each member has in the property, by pointing out what share he would be entitled to in the event of a partition.

There is no such thing as succession, properly so called, in an undivided Hindu family. The whole body of such a family, consisting of males and females, constitutes a sort of corporation, some of the members of which are coparceners, that is, persons who on partition would be entitled to demand a share, while others are only entitled to maintenance. In Malabar and Canara, where partition is not allowed, the idea of heirship would never present itself to the mind of any member of the family. Each person is

Its members

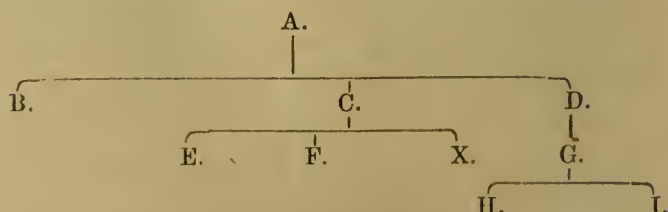
do not succeed to each other.

(c) The works of Jímûta Vāhana and Madhaviya are known by names (Dāya-bhāga and Dāya-vibhāga) which mean simply partition of heritage. See *Bhimul Doss v. Choonee Lall*, 2 Calc. 379, where the right of a nephew to share in the property with his uncles was argued as if he was claiming to succeed to the property before his uncles.

Rights arise by
birth :

simply entitled to reside and be maintained in the family house, and to enjoy that amount of affluence and consideration which arises from his belonging to a family possessed of greater or less wealth (§ 217). As he dies out his claims cease, and as others are born their claims arise. But the claims of each spring from the mere fact of their entrance into the family, not from their taking the place of any particular individual. Deaths may enlarge the beneficial interest of the survivors, by diminishing the number who have a claim upon the common fund, just as births may diminish their interests by increasing the number of claimants. But although the fact that A. is the child of B. introduces him into the family, it does not give him any definite share of the property, for B. himself has none. Nor upon the death of B. does he succeed to anything, for B. has left nothing behind to succeed to. Now in the rest of India the position of an undivided family is exactly the same, except that within certain limits each male member has, and in Bengal some females have, a right to claim a partition, if they like. But until they elect to do so, the property continues to devolve upon the members of the family for the time being by survivorship and not by succession. The position of any particular person as son, grandson, or the like, or as one of many sons or grandsons, will be very important when the time for partition arrives, because it will determine the share to which he is then entitled. But until that time arrives he can never say, I am entitled to such a definite portion of the property; because next year the proportion he would have a right to claim on a division might be much smaller, and the year after much larger, as births or deaths supervene. For instance, suppose a family to consist only of A. and his sons

are ascertained
by partition.



B. and C., on a partition each would take one-third. But if

D. was born while the family remained joint, each would take one-fourth. Supposing the family still to remain undivided, on the death of A., the possible shares of the three sons would be enlarged to one-third; and if B. were subsequently to die without issue, they would again be enlarged to one-half. As C. and D. married, their sons E., F. and G. would enter into the family and acquire an interest in the property. But that interest again would be a shifting interest, depending on the state of the family. If C. were to die, leaving only two sons E. and F., and they claimed a partition, each would take one-half of one-half. But if X. had previously been born, each would only take one-third of one-half. If they put off their claim for a division till D., G., H. and I. had all died, they would each take one-third of the whole. It is common to say that in an undivided family each member transmits to his issue his own share in the joint property, and that such issue takes *per capita inter se*, but *per stirpes* as regards the issue of other members. But it must always be remembered that this is only a statement of what would be their rights on a partition. Until a partition their rights consist merely in a common enjoyment of the common property, to which is further added, in Provinces governed by Mitāksharā, the right of male issue to forbid alienations made by their direct ancestors (d). It must be remembered, however, that these observations require modification in Bengal. There, “admitting the family to have been joint, and the sons joint in estate, the right of any one of the co-sharers would not, under the Hindu law, pass over, upon his death, to the other co-sharers. It would be part of the estate of the deceased co-sharer, and would devolve upon his legatees or natural heirs” (e). The share of an undivided brother will pass to his widow, daughter and daughter’s son, and may thus vest in a family completely different from his own (§ 450).

Mitāksharā.

Bengal.

§ 244. Now it is at this point that we see one of the most The coparcenary

(d) See this subject discussed, *Appovier v. Rama Subbaiyan*, 11 M. I. A. 75; *Sadabart Prasad v. Foolbash Kooer*, 3 B. L. R. F. B. 31; *Ram Narain v. Pertum Singh*, 20 W. R. 189; *Debi Pershad v. Thakur Dial*, 1 All. 105; *Raoi Gorain v. Teza Gorain*, 4 B. L. R. Appx. 90.

(e) *Per L. J. Turner*, 6 M. I. A. 553.

limited to those
who partake in
the funeral cake.

important distinctions between the coparcenary and the general body of the undivided family. Suppose the property to have all descended from one ancestor, who is still alive, with five generations of descendants. It by no means follows that on a partition every one of these five generations will be entitled to a share. And if the common ancestor dies, so that the property descends a step, it by no means follows that it will go by survivorship to all these generations. It may go to the representatives of one or more branches, or even to the widow of the survivor of several branches, to the total exclusion of the representatives of other branches. The question in each case will be, who are the persons who have taken the interest in the property by birth (*f*). The answer will be, that they are the persons who offer the funeral cake to the owner of the property. That is to say, the three generations next to the owner in unbroken male descent (*g*). Therefore, if a man has living, sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons, all of these constitute a single coparcenary with himself. Every one of these descendants is entitled to offer the funeral cake to him, and therefore every one of them obtains by birth an interest in his property. But the son of one of the great-grandsons would not offer the cake to him, and therefore is out of the coparcenary, so long as the common ancestor is alive. But while fresh links are continually being added to the chain of descendants by birth, so earlier links are being constantly removed from the upper end of the chain by death. So long as the principle of survivorship continues to operate, the right to the property will devolve from those who are higher in the line to those who are lower down. As each fresh member takes a share, his descendants to the third generation below him take an interest in that share by birth. So the coparcenary may go on widening and extending, until its members may include persons who are removed by indefinite distances from the common ancestor. But this is always subject to the condition that no person who claims

(*f*) This principle will not apply in Bengal, where sons take no interest by birth in their father's property. See *ante*, § 232.

(*g*) *Manu*, ix. § 186; *post*, § 424.

to take a share is more than three steps removed from a direct ascendant who has taken a share. Whenever a break of more than three degrees occurs between any holder of property and the person who claims to take next after that holder, the line ceases in that direction, and the survivorship is confined to those collaterals and descendants who are within the limit of three degrees. This was laid down in two cases in Bombay and Madras.

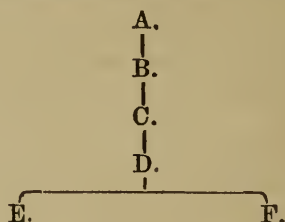
§ 245. In the former case the claim to partition was resisted, on the ground that the plaintiff was beyond the fourth degree from the acquirer of the property in dispute, the defendant being within that degree. It was argued that the analogy of the law of inheritance prevented a lineal descendant, beyond the great-grandson, from claiming partition at the hands of those who are legally in possession, as descendants from the original sole owner of the family property or any part of it (*h*). West, J., said, "The Hindu law does not contemplate a partition as absolutely necessary at any stage of the descent from a common ancestor; yet the result of the construction pressed on us would be to force the great-grandson in every case to divide from his coparceners, unless he desired his own offspring to be left destitute. Where two great-grandsons lived together as a united family, the son of each would, according to the Mitāksharâ law, acquire by birth a co-ownership with his father in the ancestral estate; yet if the argument is sound, this co-ownership would pass altogether from the son of A. or B., as either happened to die before the other. If a coparcener should die, leaving no nearer descendant than a great-great-grandson, then the latter would no doubt be excluded at once from inheritance and from partition by any nearer heirs of the deceased, as, for instance, brothers and their sons; but where there has not been such an interval as to cause a break in the course of lineal succession, neither has there been an extinguishment of the right to a partition of the property in which the deceased was a co-sharer in actual possession and enjoyment (*i*). Each descendant in succes-

Coparcenary not limited to three degrees from common ancestor.

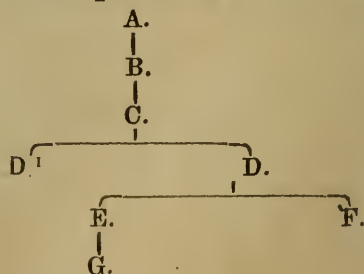
(*h*) *Moro Vishvanath v. Ganesh Vithal*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 444, 449.

(*i*) See *per Jagannâtha*, 3 Dig. 446—450.

sion becomes co-owner with his father of the latter's share, and there is never such a gap in the series as to prevent the next from fully representing the preceding one in the succession." The same principles were illustrated in detail by Mr. Justice Nanabhai Haridas. He said (*k*), "Take, for instance, the following case. A., the original owner of the property in dispute, dies, leaving a son B. and a grandson C., both members of an undivided family. B. dies, leaving C. and D., son and grandson respectively; and C. dies, leaving a son D. and two grandsons by him, E. and F. No partition of the family property has taken place, and D., E., and F. are living in a state of union. Can E. and F. compel



D. to make over to them their share of the ancestral property? According to the law prevailing on this side of India they can, sons being equally interested with their father in ancestral property (*l*). In the same way, suppose B. and C. die, leaving A. and D. members of an undivided family, and then A. dies, whereupon the whole of this property



devolves upon D., who thereafter has two sons, E. and F. They, or either of them, can likewise sue their father D. for partition of the said property, it being ancestral. Now suppose B. and C. die, leaving A., D., and D.¹, members of an undivided family, after which A. dies, whereupon the whole of his property devolves upon D. and D.¹ jointly, and

(*k*) 10 Bomb. H. C. 463.

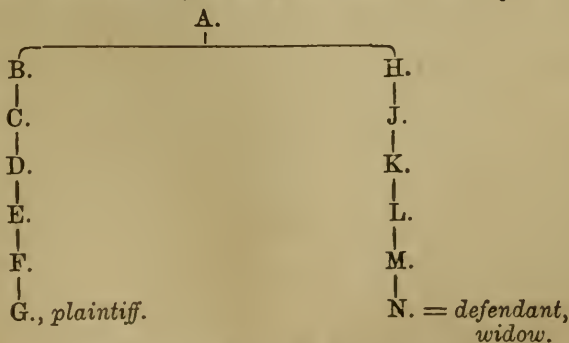
(*l*) 1 Stra. H. L. 177; 2 Ibid. 316; Mitākasharâ, i. 1, § 27, i. 5, § 3, 5, 8, 11; V. May., iv. 6, § 13.

that D. thereafter has two sons, E. and F., leaving whom D. dies. A suit against D.¹ for partition of the joint ancestral property of the family would be perfectly open to E. and F., or even to G. and F., if E. died before the suit. It would be a suit against D.¹ by a deceased brother's sons, or son and grandson (*m*). But E. and F. are both fifth, and G. sixth in descent from the original owner of the property, whereas D. and D.¹ are only fourth. Suppose, however, that A. dies after D. leaving a great-grandson, D.¹ and the two sons of D., E. and F. In this case E. and F. could not sue D.¹ for partition of property descending from A., because it is inherited by D.¹ alone, since E. and F., being sons of a great-grandson, are excluded by D.¹, A.'s surviving great-grandson, the right of representation extending no further (*n*). The rule, then, which I deduce from the authorities on this subject is, not that a partition cannot be demanded by one more than four degrees removed from the acquirer or *original owner* of the property sought to be divided, but that it cannot be demanded by one more than four degrees removed from the last owner, however remote he may be from the original owner thereof."

Rule

§ 246. This principle was also affirmed by the Madras High Court, and its application put to a more violent test. The question was as to the right of succession to an impartible Zemindary. The original owner and common ancestor of the claimant was A. The Zemindary had descended throughout in the line of H., and was last held by N., who

applied to impartible Zemindary.



died without issue, leaving a widow, the defendant. The

(*m*) V. May., iv. 4, § 21.

(*n*) See Jagannātha's Comment, on text, cccclxx.; 3 Dig. 388; 1 Nort. L. C. 292; Stra. Man. § 323; 2 Stra. H. L. 327.

plaintiff was G., who was admittedly the nearest male of kin to N. The family was undivided. It was conceded that according to the law of the Mitāksharâ, an undivided coparcener would take before the widow. But it was contended on her behalf, "that only those of the unseparated kinsmen were coheirs, who by birth had acquired a proprietary interest in the estate in common with the deceased; his coparceners, who, on a division in his lifetime, would have been sharers of the estate, and that such a coparcenership can exist only between kindred who are near sapinḍas (*i.e.*, not beyond the fourth degree), and, consequently, that the respondent (plaintiff) was not a coheir of the deceased." The Court assented to the first branch of the argument, but denied the second. They held that the Zemindary, though impartible, was still coparcenary property, and that the members of the undivided family acquired the same right to it by birth, as they would have done to any other property, subject only to the limitation of the enjoyment to one. Then as to who were coparceners, they said: "It appears to us equally certain that the limit of the coheirs must be held to include undivided collateral relations, who are descendants in the male line of one who was a coparcener with an ancestor of the last possessor. For, in the undivided coparcenary interest which vested in such coparcener, his near sapinḍas were coheirs, and when on his death, the interest vested in his sons, or son, or other near sapinḍa in the male line, the near sapinḍas of such descendants or descendant became in like manner coheirs with them or him, and so on, the coheirship became extended through the new sapinḍas down to the last descendant. Obviously, therefore, as long as the *status* of non-division continues, the members of the family who have, in this way, succeeded to a coparcenary interest, are coheirs with their kindred who possess the other undivided interests of the entire estate, and one of such kindred and his near sapinḍas in the male line cannot be the only coheirs, until by the death of all the others without descendants in the male line to the third degree, he has, or he and they have, by survivorship acquired the entire right to the heritage, as effectually as if the estate had passed upon an actual partition with

Definition of
coparceners.

the coheirs." The Court, therefore, held that the plaintiff, as undivided coparcener, would succeed before the widow (o). In this case it will be observed the plaintiff was sixth in descent from the common ancestor, the defendant's husband being equally distant.

§ 247. The same principle, viz., that property vests in certain relations by birth, and not in other relations, gives rise to a division of property into two classes, which are spoken of by Hindu lawyers as *Apratibandha* and *Sapratibandha*; terms which have been translated, not very happily, *unobstructed* and *obstructed*, or liable to obstruction. These terms are thus explained in the *Mitāksharâ* (p), "The wealth of the father or of the paternal grandfather becomes the property of his sons or of his grandsons, in right of their being his sons or his grandsons; and that is an inheritance not liable to obstruction. But property devolves on parents or uncles, brothers, or the rest, upon the demise of the owner, if there be no male issue; and thus the actual existence of a son, and the survival of the owner are impediments to the succession; and on their ceasing, the property devolves on the successor in right of his being uncle or brother. This is an inheritance subject to obstruction." The distinction is the same as that which is present to the mind of an English lawyer, when he speaks of estates as being vested or contingent, or of an heir as being the heir-at-law, or the heir presumptive. The unobstructed, or rather the unobstructible estate, is that in which the future heir has already an interest by the mere fact of his existence. If he lives long enough he must necessarily succeed to the inheritance, unless his rights are defeated by alienation or devise; and if he dies, his rights will pass on to his son, unless he is himself in the last rank of *sapindas*, in which case his son is out of the line of unobstructed heirs. On the other hand, the person who is next in apparent succession to an

Obstructed and
unobstructed
property.

(o) *Yenumula Gavuri Dévanma v. Y. Râmandora*, 6 Mad. H. C. 94, 106. See also in Bengal, *Girwurdharee Singh v. Kulahul Singh*, 4 S. D. 9 (12), where property was divided among persons four, five, and six degrees removed from the common ancestor.

(p) *Mitāksharâ*, i. 1, § 3; V. May., iv. 2, § 2. See *per curiam*, 10 B. L. R. 191; 1 All. 112.

obstructed, or rather an obstructible estate, may at any moment find himself cut out by the interposition of a prior heir, as for instance a son, widow or the like. His rights will accrue for the first time at the death of the actual holder, and will be judged of according to the existing state of the family at that time. Any nearer heir who may then be in existence will completely exclude him; and if he should die before the succession opens, even though he would have succeeded, had he survived, his heirs will not take at all, unless they happen themselves to be the next heirs to the deceased. In other words, he cannot transmit to others rights which had not arisen in himself.

Ancestral property

§ 248. The second question is as to the coparcenary property. The first species of coparcenary property is that which is known as ancestral property. The meaning of this phrase might be taken to be, property which descended upon another from an ancestor, however remote, or of whatever sex. Where property so descended upon several persons simultaneously, and with equal rights both of possession and enjoyment, as for instance upon several brothers, sons, grandsons, nephews or the like, it would certainly be joint property, by the very hypothesis. But this is not what is generally known as ancestral property. That term, in its technical sense, is applied to property which descends upon one person in such a manner that his issue (*q*) acquire certain rights in it as against him. For instance, if a father under Mitâksharâ law is attempting to dispose of property, we enquire whether it is ancestral property. The answer to this question is, that property is ancestral property if it has been inherited as unobstructed property, that it is not ancestral if it has been inherited as obstructed property (§ 247). The reason of this distinction is, that in the former case the heir had an actual vested interest in the property, before the inheritance fell in, and therefore his own issue acquired by birth an interest in that interest. Hence when the property actually devolved upon him, he took it subject

is unobstructed property.

(*q*) I may as well state, once for all, that the word "issue" will be used throughout this work as embracing son, grandson, and great-grandson. *Post*, § 460.

to the interest they had already acquired. But in the latter case, he had no interest whatever in the property, before the descent took place; therefore, when that event occurred, he received the property free of all claims upon it by his issue, and *à fortiori*, by any other person. Hence all property which a man inherits from a direct male ancestor, not exceeding three degrees higher than himself, is ancestral property, and is at once held by himself in coparcenary with his own issue. But where he has inherited from a collateral relation, as for instance from a brother, nephew, cousin or uncle, it is not ancestral property (*r*); consequently his own descendants are not coparceners in it with him. They cannot restrain him in dealing with it, nor compel him to give them a share of it (*s*). On the same principle, property which a man inherits from a female, or through a female, as for instance a daughter's son, or which he has taken from an ancestor more remote than three degrees, or which he has taken as heir to a priest or a fellow-student, would not be ancestral property (*t*). And that which is ancestral, and therefore coparcenary property, as regards a man's own issue, is not so as regards his collaterals. For they have no interest in it by birth (*u*). On the other hand, property is not the less ancestral because it was the separate or self-acquired property of the ancestor from whom it came (*x*). When it has once made a descent, its origin is immaterial. And all savings made out of ancestral property, and all purchases or profits made from the income or sale of ancestral property, would follow the character of the fund from which they proceeded (*y*).

Ancestral property.

(*r*) It is hardly necessary to remark that I am speaking of inheritance, not of survivorship. The enlarged share which accrues to the remaining brothers on the death of an undivided brother is ancestral property, and subject to all its incidents. *Gungoo Mull v. Bunseedhur*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 170.

(*s*) *Rayadur Nullatumbi v. R. Mukunda*, 3 Mad. H. C. 455; *Nund. Coomar v. Moolvie Razeeooddeen*, 10 B. L. R. 183; *Jowahir Singh v. Guyan Singh*, 4 Agra H. C. 78; *Lochun Singh v. Nemdharee*, 20 W. R. 170; *Pitam Singh v. Ujagar Singh*, 1 All. 652.

(*t*) 3 Dig. 61; 2 W. & B. Introd. 19, approved *per cur.* 10 B. L. R. 192.

(*u*) *Ajoodhia v. Kashee Gir*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 31; *Gopal Singh v. Bheekunlal*, S. D. of 1859, 294; *Gopal Dutt v. Gopal Lall*, Ibid. 1314.

(*x*) *Ram Narain v. Pertum Singh*, 20 W. R. 189.

(*y*) *Sudanund Mohapattur v. Bonomalee Doss*, 6 W. R. 256; 8 W. R. 455; 11 W. R. 436, reversed on another point in P. C. 12 B. L. R. 304; *Ghansham Kumari v. Govind Singh*, 5 S. D. 202 (240); *Umrithnath Chowdhry v. Gou-*

Divided property.

Property obtained from ancestor by gift:

§ 249. Where ancestral property has been divided between several joint owners, there can be no doubt that if any of them have issue living at the time of the partition, the share which falls to him will continue to be ancestral property in his hands, as regards his issue, for their rights had already attached upon it, and the partition only cuts off the claims of the dividing members. The father and his issue still remain joint (z). But it is not so clearly settled whether the same rule would apply where the partition had been made before the birth of issue. In a case in Calcutta it was held that where a father by various deeds of gift had distributed his property among his sons, the portion obtained by each was ancestral property as regards his issue. It does not appear whether the issue had been in existence at the time of the gift. But the son contended that it was by the gift his self-acquired property. This the Court refused to admit. After a full examination of the Hindu authorities, they said, "We think that according to the Mitāksharâ, landed property acquired by a grandfather and distributed by him amongst his sons, does not by such gift become the self-acquired property of the sons so as to enable them to dispose of it by gift or sale without the consent, and to the prejudice of the grandsons. The property cannot be said to have been acquired without detriment to the father's (*i.e.*, ancestral) estate, because it was not only given out of that estate, but in substitution for the undivided share of that estate to which the father appears to have been entitled. It cannot therefore be taken to have been given simply by the favour of the father, but upon consideration of the father surrendering some interest or right to share in the grandfather's estate, which he did by the acceptance of this separate parcel. We think that the father took it with the incidents to which the undivided

reenath, 13 M. I. A. 542; *Kristnappa v. Ramasawmy*, 8 Mad. H. C. 25. As to savings from income of impartible Zemindary, or purchases made out of such savings, see *post*, § 258. *Semble* that movable property which has made a descent, and is then converted into land, possesses all the incidents of ancestral immovable property. *Sham Narain v. Raghoobur Dyal*, 3 Calc. 508.

(z) *Lakshmibai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 5 Bomb. O. C. 129. The same point was very lately decided in Calcutta. The report does not state whether the son was born before or after the partition, but I think the latter seems to have been the case. *Adurmoni v. Chowdhry Sib*, 3 Calc. 1.

share for which it was substituted would have been subject" (a). This reasoning would appear to apply equally in favour of issue unborn at the time of the gift. Similarly it was held in Madras, that a father did not take his share of the estate as self-acquired property, in consequence of having received it under the will of his own father. The Court said, "It seems to us that there is no reason whatever in the contention that its quality was changed by his choosing to accept it, apparently under the terms of his father's will. Still less ground would there be for the contention that his acquiescence in that mode of receiving it would vest in himself a larger interest than he would have taken by descent" (b). And where a man had obtained a share of family property on partition, which was mortgaged to its full value, and which he had subsequently cleared from the mortgage by his own self-acquisitions, it was held that the unencumbered property was ancestral property in his hands (c).

§ 250. Secondly, property may be joint property without having been ancestral. Where the members of a joint family acquire property by or with the assistance of joint funds, or by their joint labour, such property is the joint property of the persons who have acquired it, whether it is an increment to ancestral property, or whether it has arisen without any nucleus of descended property (d). Whether the issue of such joint acquirers would by birth alone acquire an interest in such property, without evidence that they had in any way contributed to it, is a question which, as far as I know, has never arisen. If a single individual acquired a fortune by his own exertions, without any assistance from ancestral property, his issue would certainly take no interest in it. If several brothers did the same, the property would be joint as between themselves. It would certainly be self-

or by will.
✓
✓
Property jointly acquired

(a) *Muddun Gopal v. Ram Buksh*, 6 W. R. 71, 73. In *Mohabeer Koor v. Joobha Singh*, 16 W. R. 221, a contrary opinion seems to have been expressed by Jackson, J. But in that case the property appears not to have been ancestral at all. See as to what is "a gift through affection," *Lakshman v. Ramchandra*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561.

(b) *Tara Chand v. Reeb Ram*, 3 Mad. H. C. 50, 55.

(c) *Visalatchy v. Annasawmy*, 5 Mad. H. C. 150.

(d) Mann. ix. § 215; Yājñavalkya, ii. 120; Mitāksharā, i. 4, § 15; 3 Dig. 386; F. MacN. 351, 362; *Ramasheshaiya v. Bhagavat*, 4 Mad. H. C. 5; *Rampershad v. Sheochurn*, 10 M. I. A. 490; *Radhabai v. Nanarav*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 151.

acquired as regard all collaterals, and it is difficult to see why it should not be the same as regards their issue, unless they chose voluntarily to admit the latter to a share of it.

or thrown into
common stock.

§ 251. Thirdly, property which was originally self-acquired, may become joint property, if it has been voluntarily thrown by the owner into the joint stock, with the intention of abandoning all separate claims upon it. This doctrine has been repeatedly recognized by the Privy Council. Perhaps the strongest case was one, where the owner had actually obtained a statutory title to the property under the Oudh Taluqdars Act I of 1869. He was held by his conduct to have restored it to the condition of ancestral property (*e*).

Impartible pro-
perty may be
joint.

§ 252. Liability to partition is one of the commonest incidents of joint property, but it must not be supposed that joint property and partible property are mutually convertible terms. If it were so, an impartible Zemindary could never be joint property. The reverse, however, is the case. The mode of its enjoyment necessarily cuts down to a very small point the rights of the other members of the family with respect to it. But there are two particulars in which its joint character becomes material—first, with reference to the order of succession; and, secondly, as to the powers of alienation possessed by each successive holder. Now as to the first point, it has been repeatedly held by the Privy Council that the order of succession to a Zemindary depended upon whether “though impartible it was part of the common family property,” or was the separate or self-acquired property of the holder (*f*). As to the second point, the authority is less decisive. But the cases seem to show that the holder of an impartible Zemindary under Mitâksharâ law would be under the same restrictions as to alienation in regard to it as to any other ancestral property. The subject will have to be discussed more fully hereafter (*g*).

(*e*) *Hurpershad v. Sheo Dyal*, 3 I. A. 259; *per cur.* 10 M. I. A. 506; *Chellayammal v. Mutialammal*, 6 Mad. Jur. P. C. 108; *Sham Narain v. Ct. of Wards*, 20 W. R. 197.

(*f*) *Katama Nachier v. Shivagunga*, 9 M. I. A. 539, 589, 610; *Yanumula Venkayammah v. Y. Boochia*, 13 M. I. A. 333, 336; *Chowdhry Chintamun v. Mt. Nowlukho*, 2 I. A. 263; *Yanumula Gavuri Dévamma v. Y. Râmandora*, 6 Mad. H. C. 93, 103; *Periasawmy v. Periasawmy* 5 I. A. 61.

(*g*) See *post*, § 293.

§ 253. An examination into the property of the joint family would not be complete without pointing out what property may be held by the individual members which is not joint property. Property which is not joint must be either separate property or self-acquired. Separate property, *ex vi termini*, assumes that the holder of it has ceased to be in union with those in reference to whom the property is separate. But a man is very commonly separated from one set of persons, as, for instance, his brothers, while he is in union with others, as, for instance, his own issue. As regards the former, his property is separate; as regards the latter, it is joint (§ 249). Self-acquisition, on the other hand, may be made by any one while still in a state of union, and when made will be effective against the whole world. I have already (§ 212—214) pointed out the early history of this branch of the law. The following remarks will show how it has been dealt with by modern decisions.

Coparceners
may hold pro-
perty separately.

§ 254. The whole doctrine of self-acquisition is briefly stated by Yājñavalkya as follows:—“Whatever is acquired by the coparcener himself, without detriment to the father’s estate, as a present from a friend, or a gift at nuptials, does not appertain to the coheirs (*h*). Nor shall he who recovers hereditary property which has been taken away give it up to the coparceners; nor what has been gained by science” (*i*). Upon this the Smṛiti Chandrikā remarks that the estate of the father means the estate of any undivided coheir (*k*). While the Mitāksharā adds, that the words “without detriment to the father’s estate” must be connected with each member of the sentence. “Consequently what is obtained from a friend as the return of an obligation conferred at the charge of the patrimony; What is received at a marriage concluded in the form Asura or the like (*l*); What is recovered of the hereditary estate by the expenditure of the father’s goods; What is earned by science acquired at the

Self-acquisition.

(*h*) See as to presents from relations or friends, Manu, ix. § 206; Nārada, xiii. § 6, 7; *Muddun Gopal v. Ram Buksh*, 6 W. R. 71; *ante*, § 249; Mitāksharā, i. 5, § 9.

(*i*) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 118, 119; Mitāksharā, i. 4, § 1. See Dāya Bhāga, vi. 1; D. K. S. iv. 2. § 1—12; V. May., iv. 7, § 1—14.

(*k*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, vii. § 28.

(*l*) *Sheo Gobind v. Sham Narrain*, 7 N. W. P. H. C. 75.

expense of ancestral wealth ; all that must be shared with the whole of the brethren and the father" (*m*). The whole contest in each instance is 'to show that the gain has been without "detriment to the estate." In early times the slightest assistance from the joint patrimony, however indirect, was considered to be such a detriment, and the possession of any joint property was considered as conclusively proving that there had been such an assistance. The Madras Court has always leant very strongly against self-acquisition. But the recent tendency of decisions seems to be towards a more sensible view of the law, following out its spirit rather than its letter.

Gains of science.

§ 255. For instance, the gains of science or valour, which seem to have been the earliest forms of self-acquisition, were held to be joint property, if the learning had been imparted at the expense of the joint family, or if the warrior had used his father's sword (§ 213). The law upon this point was examined with great fulness in a case where the adoptive mother of a dancing girl claimed her property, on the ground that it had been acquired by skill imparted at the mother's expense. The High Court of Madras, overruling a very elaborate judgment of the Civil Judge, decided that if these gains were to be considered the gains of science, they were joint property of the acquirer and her mother (*n*). In a later case the gains of a Vakil were held to be divisible, on the ground that they had been obtained by education imparted at the family expense, although it was found that he had received from his father nothing more than a general education. Holloway, J., referring to the dancing girl's case, said, "I fully adhere to the judgment of the High Court, for which I am responsible, and especially to the statement that the ordinary gains of science by one who has received a family maintenance are certainly partible" (*o*). The decisions in the above cases were adopted in general terms by the Chief Justice in Bombay in another case of a

(*m*) *Mitāksharā*, i. 4, § 6.

(*n*) *Chalakonda Alasani v. Ch. Ratnachalam*, 2 Mad. H. C. 56. See 2 W. MacN. 167.

(*o*) *D. Gungaradhu v. D. Narasimma*, 7 Mad. H. C. 47.

Vakil. There, however, the point really did not arise, as it appeared that he united the business of money-lender with that of Vakil, and that there was joint family property of which he had the use (*p*).

§ 256. It is, however, difficult to see why a person who has made gains by science, after having been educated or maintained at the family expense, should be in a worse position than any other person who has been so educated or maintained, and who has afterwards made self-acquisitions. Jímûta Vâhana lays it down, that where it is attempted to reduce a separate acquisition into common property on the ground that it was obtained with the aid of common property, it must be shown that the joint stock was used for the express purpose of gain. "It becomes not common merely because property may have been used for food or other necessities, since that is similar to the sucking of the mother's breast" (*q*). This seems to be good sense. If a member of a Hindu family were sent to England at the joint expense, to be educated for the Bar or the Civil Service, it seems fair enough that his extra gains should fall into the common stock, as a recompense for the extra outlay incurred. It might be assumed that when the outlay was incurred the reimbursement was contemplated. But it is different where all start on exactly the same level, with nothing but the ordinary maintenance and education which is common to persons of that class of life. Accordingly in a Madras case, where a Hindu had made a large mercantile fortune, his claim to hold it as self-acquired was allowed, though he had admittedly been maintained in his earlier years, educated and married out of patrimonial means (*r*). So in a Bengal case, where self-acquisition was set up, and the defendant had been maintained at the family expense, but proved that in acquiring his property he did not use any funds which belonged to the joint family, his gains apparently being derived from some lucrative employment, it was held that the plea was made out. Mitter, J., said, "The

Effect of education in family.

Maintenance and education in family.

(*p*) *Bai Mancha v. Narotamdas*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 1, 6.

(*q*) *Dâya Bhâga*, vi. 1, § 44—50; 1 Stra. H. L. 214; 2 Stra. H. L. 374.

(*r*) *P. Chellapermall v. Veerapermall*, 4 Mad. Jur. 54, 240.

plaintiff's case in the Court below was that the defendant received his education from the joint estate, and that he is consequently entitled to participate in every property that has been acquired by the defendant by the aid of such education. But this contention is nowhere sanctioned by the Hindu law, and I see nothing in justice to recommend it" (s). This case was approved by the Privy Council in an appeal where it had been contended that the property acquired by a successful merchant was joint property, because he had been educated out of joint funds. The fact was negatived, upon which the Committee observed, "This being their Lordships' view, it does not become necessary to consider whether the somewhat startling proposition of law put forward by the appellant, which, stated in plain terms, amounts to this—that if a member of a joint Hindu family receives any education whatever from the joint funds, he becomes for ever after incapable of acquiring by his own skill and industry any separate property—is or is not maintainable. Very strong and clear authority would be required to support such a proposition. For the reasons that they have given, it does not appear to them necessary to review the text-books or the authorities which have been cited on this subject. It may be enough to say, that according to their Lordships' view, no texts which have been cited go to the full extent of the proposition contended." Then, after referring with approval to the Bengal case as laying the law down less broadly than those in Madras and Bombay, the judgment concluded by saying, "It may hereafter possibly become necessary for this Board to consider, whether or not the more limited and guarded expression of the law upon this subject of the Courts of Bengal, is not more correct than what appears to be the doctrine of the Courts of Madras" (t).

Possession of
joint funds not
conclusive.

§ 257. On the same principle, although the admitted possession or existence of joint funds will throw upon the self-acquirer the onus of proving that such funds did not

62 M. R. 225, where it was treated as.

(s) *Dhunoodarce v. Gunput Lall*, 11 B. L. R. 201, n. ; 10 W. R. 122.

(t) *P. Valoo v. P. Sooriah*, 4 I. A. 109, 117.

form the nucleus of his fortune (*u*), the fact itself is not conclusive. In a case in the Supreme Court of Bengal, Grant, J., said, "Where the property descended is incapable of being considered as the germ whose improvement has constituted the wealth subsequently possessed, this wealth must evidently be deemed acquired. An ancestral cottage never converted, or capable of conversion to an available amount into money, in which the maker of the wealth had the trifling benefit of residing with the rest of the family when he commenced turning his industry to profit,—so of other things of a trifling nature" (*x*). Of course the contrary would be held, if it appeared that the income of the joint property was large enough to leave a surplus, after discharging the necessary expenses of the family, out of which the acquisitions might have been made (*y*). And purchases made with money borrowed on the security of the common property will belong to the joint family, and they will be jointly liable for the debt (*z*). But it would be otherwise if the loan was made on the sole credit of the borrower, or even if the loan was made out of the common fund, under a special agreement that it was to be at the sole risk of the borrower, and for his sole benefit (*a*).

§ 258. Estates conferred by Government in the exercise of their sovereign power, become the self-acquired property of the donee, whether such gifts are absolutely new grants, or only the restoration to one member of the family, of property previously held by another, but confiscated (*b*). But where one member of a family forcibly dispossesses another who is in possession of an ancestral Zemindary, and there is

Government
grants.

(*u*) *Shib Pershad v. Gungamonee*, 16 W. R. 291; *Pran Kristo v. Streemutty Bhagerutee*, 20 W. R. 158.

(*x*) *Gooroochurn v. Goluckmoney*, Fulton, 165, 181; *per curiam*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 63; *Strimati Jadoomonee v. Gungadhar*, 1 Boul. 600; V. Darp. 521.

(*y*) *Sudanund Mohapattur v. Soorjo Monee*, 11 W. R. 436.

(*z*) *Sheopershad v. Kulunder*, 1 S. D. 76 (101).

(*a*) *Rai Nursingh Dass v. Rai Narain*, 3 N. W. P. H. C. 218.

(*b*) *Katama Nachiar v. Shivaganga*, 9 M. I. A. 606; *Beer Pertab v. Rajender Pertab*, 12 M. I. A. 1. As to grants in Oudh after the Confiscation of 1858, and under Act I of 1869, see *Hurpershad v. Sheo Dyal*, 3 I. A. 259; *Hardeo Bux v. Jowahir Singh*, 4 I. A. 178; *Brijindar v. Janki Koer*, 5 I. A. 1; *Thakur Shere v. Thakurain Dario*, 3 Calc. 645; *Gouri Shunkur v. Bulrampore*, 6 I. A. 1; *Nawab Mulka Jahan v. Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow*, ib. 63; *Mirza Jehan v. Nawab Afsur Bahu*, ib. 76. A grant of a jaghire is presumably only for life. *Gulabdas v. Collector of Surat*, ib.

Savings from
impartible
property.

no legal forfeiture, nor any fresh grant by a person competent to confer a legal title, the new occupant takes, not by self-acquisition, but in continuation of the former title (c).

A point which has never been decided is, whether the savings made by a Zemindar under Mitâksharâ law, are his self-acquired property, or not. It is quite settled that, although an impartible Zemindary may be joint property, in the sense that all the family have a joint and vested interest in the reversion (§ 252), its annual income, and the accumulations of such income, are the absolute and exclusive property of the possessor of the Zemindary for the time being. None of his kindred can claim an account of the mode in which he has spent his income, nor a share in the profits annually accruing or laid up. He may spend as much or as little of his income as he likes. If he spends it all, it is not waste, and whatever he invests is absolutely at his own disposal during his life (d). There could therefore be no coparcenary in such savings, and therefore no survivorship (e). If therefore a Zemindar in Madras left no issue, it seems to me that his widow would take his savings before his brothers, or their issue, and if he left issue, they would take exclusively. This appears to have been the view of the Madras High Court in one of the two cases quoted above, where they say, "Whether regarded as the separately acquired funds of the Zemindar, or as it really is, his acquisition derived from ancestral property owned by him solely, it is equally divisible family property as between his sons" (f). Of course savings handed down from previous Zemindars would follow a different rule; they would become the joint property of his descendants, of whom the succeeding Zemindar was only one, his brothers and their issue being the others.

Recovery of
ancestral pro-
perty.

§ 259. Another mode of self-acquisition, which is not very likely to arise now, is where one coparcener unaided by the others, or by the family funds, recovers, with the acquies-

(c) *Y. Venkayammah v. Y. Boochia*, 13 M. I. A. 333.

(d) *Maharajalungaru v. Rajah Row Pantalu*, 5 Mad. H. C. 31, 41; *Lutchmana Row v. Terimul Row*, 4 Mad. Jur. 241.

(e) See 12 M. I. A. 540.

(f) 5 Mad. H. C. 41.

cence of his co-heirs, ancestral property, which had been seized by others, and which his family had been unable to recover (g). In order to bring a case within this rule, the property must have passed into the possession of strangers, and be held by them adversely to the family. It is not sufficient that it should be held by a person claiming title to hold it as a member of the family, or by a stranger claiming under the family, as for instance by mortgage. So also the recovery by one co-heir for his own special benefit is only permissible where "the neglect of the coparceners to assert their title had been such as to show that they had no intention to seek to recover the property, or were at least indifferent as to its recovery, and thus tacitly assented to the recoverer using his means and exertions for that purpose, or upon an express understanding with the recoverer's coparceners." "The recovery, if not made with the privity of the co-heirs, must at least have been *bonâ fide*, and not in fraud of their title, or by anticipating them in their intention of recovering the lost property." Finally, it must be an actual recovery of possession, and not merely the obtaining of a decree for possession (h).

As to the result of such a recovery, there seems to be a conflict in the *Mitâksharâ*. At ch. i. 5, § 11, the author, referring to *Manu*, ix. § 209, makes the property which has been recovered belong exclusively to the recoverer. At ch. i. 4, § 11, he quotes a text of *Çankha* as establishing that, "if it be land, he takes the fourth part, and the remainder is equally shared among all the brethren." Dr. Mayr reconciles the discrepancy by supposing that the former text refers to the case of a recovery by the father, while the latter refers to one of several brethren or other coparceners, who all stand on the same level (i). The Bengal authorities, however, take the rule as applying to every recoverer, but only in the case of land (k). It is to

Result to re-
coverer.

(g) *Manu*, ix. § 209; *Mitâksharâ*, i. 4, § 2, 6; *Dâya Bhâga*, vi. 2, § 31—37; D. K. S. iv. 2, § 6—9.

(h) *Visalatchy v. Annasawmy*, 5 Mad. H. C. 150; *Bissessur v. Seetal Chunder*, 8 W. R. 13; 9 W. R. 69; *Bolakee v. Ct. of Wards*, 14, W. R. 34.

(i) Mayr., 25; *Vṛihaspati*, 3 Dig. 32.

(k) *Dâya Bhâga*, vi. 2, § 36—39; D. K. S. iv. 2, § 7, 8; 1 W. MacN. 52; 2 W. MacN. 157.

Acquisitions
aided by joint
funds.

be observed that the recoverer takes one fourth first, and then shares equally with the others in the residue (*l*).

§ 260. An intermediate case between self-acquired and joint property is the case, resting upon a text of Vâsishta, in which property acquired by a single co-parcener, at the expense of the patrimony, is said to be subject to partition, the acquirer being entitled to a double share (*m*). It has already been suggested (§ 213) that this text probably applied originally to self-acquisition properly so called, and that it cut down the rights of a self-acquirer, instead of enlarging the rights of one who has made use of common property. The Smṛiti Chandrikâ and Mâdhavîya both restrict the text to the gains of learning, when considered to be partible in consequence of the education from which they sprung, having been imparted at the expense of the family (*n*). The general principles laid down by Vijñaneśvara seem to exclude the idea that any special and exclusive benefit can be obtained to any co-heir by a use of the family property (*o*). Mr. W. MacNaghten states that under Benares law no such benefit can be obtained, whatever may have been the personal exertions of any individual, but that the rule does exist in Bengal (*p*). There is no doubt that in that province the rule has been repeatedly laid down (*q*), but little attempt has been made to define its extent, or the cases to which it applies. In a case before the Supreme Court of Bengal, Sir Lawrence Peel, C.J., laid down the law as follows: "The authorities establish, and the uniform course of practice in this Court is conformable to them, that the sole manager of the joint stock is thereby entitled to no increased share, and that skill and labour contributed by one joint sharer alone in the augmentation or improvement of the common stock, establishes no right to a larger share; that the acquisition of a distinct property

(*l*) D. K. S. iv. 2, § 9; 3 Dig. 365.

(*m*) Mitâksharâ, i. 4, § 29; Dâya Bhâga, vi. 1, § 27—29.

(*n*) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, vii. § 9; Mâdhavîya, p. 49, and see futwah, 2 W. MacN. 167.

(*o*) Mitâksharâ, i. 4, § 1—6.

(*p*) 1 W. MacN. 52; 2 W. MacN. 7, n., 158, 160, n., 162, n.

(*q*) *Gudadhur v. Ajodhearam*, 1 S. D. 6 (7); *Koshul v. Radhanath*, 1 S. D. 336 (448); *Mt. Doorputtee v. Haradhun*, 3 S. D. 98; *Kripa Sindhu v. Kanhya*, 5 S. D. 335 (393); *per curiam*, 2 B. L. R. A. C. 287.

without aid of the joint funds or joint labour gives a separate right, and creates a separate estate; that the acquisition of a *distinct* property, with the aid of joint funds, or of joint labour, gives the acquirer a right to a double share, and prevents the character of separate estate from attaching to such an acquisition; and lastly, that the union with the common stock of that which might otherwise have been held in severalty, gives it the character of a joint and not of a separate property." Grant, J., held to the same effect, adding that in this respect the law of Bengal and the *Mitāksharâ* coincide, and that to entitle the acquirer to a double share, he must only be "aided by means drawn from the joint funds of little consideration" (r). This decision is cited with approval by the Supreme Court of Bengal (s) as laying down both the rule and the exception as to joint and separate acquisitions. The first principle laid down by Sir L. Peel, that in order to entitle the acquirer to a double share, the property acquired must be a distinct one, is in accordance with the *Mitāksharâ*, which, after citing *Vâsishta's* text, proceeds, "The author (*Yājñavalkya*) propounds an exception to that maxim. But if the common stock be improved, an equal division is ordained;" and says that in such a case, a double share is not allotted to the acquirer (t). The second principle laid down by Grant, J., that the assistance derived from the joint funds must be of little consideration, seems also to be in accordance with the *Dâya Bhâga*. It will be seen that *Jîmûta Vâhana* rests the doctrine of the double share of the acquirer, not upon the text of *Vâsishta*, which he seems to take as applying to self-acquisition, properly so called, but upon a text of *Vyâsa*. "The brethren participate in that wealth, which one of them gains by valour or the like, using any common property, either a weapon or a vehicle" (u). Here the meritorious cause of the acquisition is the brother himself, the assistance derived from the joint funds being insignificant. This view

(r) *Gooroochurn v. Goluckmoney*, Fulton, 165.

(s) 6 M. I. A. 539; *post*, § 264.

(t) *Mitāksharâ*, i. 4, § 30, 31.

(u) *Dâya Bhâga*, ii. § 41, vi. i. § 28, 14.

is in accordance with the futwah of the Pandits in *Purtab Bahauder v. Tilukdaree* (x), "of several brothers living together in family partnership, should one acquire property by means of funds common to the whole, the property so acquired belongs jointly to all the brothers. Should, however, the means of acquisition, drawn from the joint funds, be of little consideration, and the personal exertions considerable, two shares belong to the acquirer, and one to each of the other brothers." Both points have been affirmed by later decisions of the Bengal High Court (y).

Burthen of
proof.

§ 261. There is a good deal of conflict, probably more apparent than real, between the decisions of the High Court of Bengal as to the question upon whom lies the onus of proof, where property is claimed by one person as being joint property, and withheld by another as being self-acquired, or *vice versâ*. The general principle undoubtedly is, that as every Hindu family is supposed to be joint unless the contrary is proved, so if nothing appears upon the case except that a member of a family, admittedly or presumably joint, is in possession of property, if he alleges that it is his own self-acquisition, he is alleging something which is an exception to the general rule, and it lies upon him to prove the exception (z). But on the other hand, the case of a plaintiff who seeks to establish a claim to joint family property is no exception to the rule, that the plaintiff must make out his case. He starts with a presumption in his favour. But this presumption must be taken along with the other facts, proved or admitted, and those facts may so far remove the presumption arising from the ordinary condition of a Hindu family, as to throw back the burthen of proof on the other side (a). What, then, is the extent of the presumption as to the condition of a Hindu family? "The normal state of every Hindu family is joint. Presumably every such family is joint in food, worship, and estate. In the

(x) 1 S. D. 179 (236).

(y) *Sree Narain v. Gooro Pershad*, 6 W. R. 219; *Sheo Dhyal v. Judoonath*, 9 W. R. 61; and *per Colvile, C.J.*, *Strimati Jadromonee v. Gangadhar*, 1 Boul., 600; *V. Darp.*, 521.

(z) *Luximon Row v. Mullar Row*, 2 Kn., 60, 63.

(a) *Bholanath v. Ajoodhia*, 12 B. L. R. 336; *Bodh Singh v. Gunesh Chunder*, 12 B. L. R. 317 (P. C.).

absence of proof of division, such is the legal presumption. But the members of the family may sever in all or any of these three things" (b). Of course there is no presumption that a family, because it is joint, possesses joint property, or any property. But where it is proved or admitted that a joint family possesses some joint property, and the property in dispute has been acquired, or is held in a manner consistent with that character, "the presumption of law is that all the property they were possessed of was joint property, until it was shown by evidence that one member of the family was possessed of separate property." And this presumption is not rebutted merely by showing "that it was purchased in the name of one member of the family, and that there are receipts in his name respecting it; for all that is perfectly consistent with the notion of its having been joint property, and even if it had been joint property, it still would have been treated in exactly the same manner" (c). The difference of opinion seems to arise as to the degree to which the presumption is to be pushed, where the family is joint, but where no nucleus of joint property is either admitted or proved, and where some property is held by one or more members in a manner, as regards either origin or enjoyment, apparently, though not necessarily, inconsistent with the idea of a joint interest.

Presumption as
to union.

§ 262. The law upon this point was laid down as follows by the Sudder Court of Bengal. "Where, by the plaintiff's own admission, the properties in dispute were not acquired by the use of patrimonial funds, and the defendants never acknowledged that they were acquired by the joint exertions and aid of the plaintiff and his father, it was for the plaintiff to prove his own allegations as to the original joint interest in the purchase of the property. The mere circumstance of the parties having been united in food, raises no such sufficient presumption of a joint interest as to relieve the plaintiffs from the onus of proof" (d). And the Bengal High

(b) *Per curiam*, 12 M. I. A., 540; 9 M. I. A. 92.

(c) *Dharm Das v. Mt. Shama Soonderi*, 3 M. I. A. 229, 240; *Unrithnath v. Goureenath*, 13 M. I. A. 542; *Rampershad v. Sheochurn*, 10 M. I. A. 490, 505.

(d) *Kishoree v. Chummun Lall*, S. D. of 1852, 111, citing 2 W. MacN. 152—156; F. MacN. 60, approved *Mt. Soobbhedur v. Bolaram*, W. R. Sp. No. 57.

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Burthen of
proof.

Court said, "To render it joint property, the consideration for its purchase must have proceeded either out of ancestral funds, or have been produced out of the joint property, or by joint labour. But neither of these alternatives is matter of legal presumption. It can only be brought to the cognizance of a court of justice in the same way as any other fact, viz., by evidence. Consequently, whoever's interest it is to establish it, he must be able to produce the evidence. The plaintiff coming into Court to claim a share in property as being joint family property, must lay some foundation before he can succeed in his suit. He must, at least, show that the defendants whom he sues constitute a joint family, and that the property in question became joint property when acquired, or that at some period since its acquisition it has been enjoyed jointly by the family. It will be sufficient for this purpose for him to show that the family, of which the defendants came, was at some antecedent period, not unreasonably great, living joint in estate; and that the property in question was either a portion of the patrimonial estate, so enjoyed by the family, or that it has been since acquired by joint funds. In this case the Principal Sudr Amin has found that the plaintiff has given no proof of the family being joint, beyond the admitted fact of the three persons being brothers, and the plaintiff has also given no sort of proof that these brothers ever were living in the joint enjoyment of any property, still less that this property was acquired by the use and employment of any joint funds. It seems to us that he was entirely right, on this finding, to dismiss the plaintiff's suit without looking further into the case" (e). The principles laid down in this case as to the *onus probandi* were, however, denied to be law by the Chief Justice, Sir R. Couch, in *Taruk Chunder v. Jodeshur Chunder* (f). He laid down the rule to be that, "as the presumption of law is that all the property the family is in possession of is joint property, the rule that the possession of one of the joint owners is the possession of all would apply

(e) *Shiu Golam v. Baran Singh*, 1 B. L. R. A. C. 164.

(f) 11 B. L. R. 193, acc. *Annundo Mohun v. Lamb*, 1 Marsh. 169; *Hait Singh v. Dabee Singh*, 2 N. W. P. H. C. 308; *Nursingh Das v. Narain Das*, 3 N. W. P. H. C. 217; *Sidapa v. Pooncakooty*, Morris, 100.

to this extent, that is one of them was found to be in possession of any property, the family being presumed to be joint in estate, the presumption would be, not that he was in possession of it as separate property acquired by him, but as a member of the joint family." This ruling, however, was considered and differed from by other Judges of the High Court in two subsequent cases (g), and was again considered by the High Court and affirmed by two later cases. One of these was the decision of a Court of Appeal, and in the second a single Judge refused to refer the point to a full bench as being conclusively settled (h).

Conflict of opinion.

§ 263. It seems to me that the difficulty arises from attempting to lay down an abstract proposition of law, which will govern every case, however different in its facts. It is correct to say that a Hindu family is presumed to be joint. It is merely equivalent to saying, that, where nothing else is known of a family, the probability is that they have never entered into a partition with each other. It is a definite statement as to the probability of a single fact. But to say generally of any piece of property in the possession of any member of the family, that it is presumably joint estate, is to assert one or other of a great many different propositions. Either that in its present condition it was ancestral property, or that it was acquired by means or with the assistance of ancestral property, or by means of joint labour, or joint funds, or both, or that it was acquired by a single member without aid from other funds, or from other members, and then thrown into the common stock. Now these propositions are each different in their probability, and different in the facts which would establish them. The very statement of the plaintiff's case or his evidence may negative some of them, just as the defendant's case may admit some of them. It seems impossible to say what the presumption is, until it is known what proposition the plaintiff and defendant respectively put forward. This seems to be all that is laid down by the Bengal cases, which go most strongly

Suggested solution.

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(g) *Bholanath v. Ajoodhia*, 12 B. L. R. 336; *Denonath v. Hurryrnarrain*, 12 B. L. R. 349.

(h) *Gobind Chunder v. Doorgapersad*, 14 B. L. R. 337; *Shushee Mohun v. Aukhil Chunder*, 25 W. R. 232; *Vedavalle v. Narayana*, 2 Mad. L. R. 19.

Burthen of proof against the rights of undivided family. The Judges say, varies. "Tell us what your case is : when we find how much of it is admitted by the other side, we will then be able to say whether you are relieved of the necessity of proving any part of your case, and how much of it." For instance, if the plaintiff's case was that the property was ancestral, and the defendant admitted that it was purchased with his father's money, but alleged that the purchase was made in his own name, and for his own exclusive benefit, the burthen of proof would lie on him (*i*). Again, if the case was that the property was purchased out of the proceeds of the family estate, and it was admitted that there was family property, of which the defendant was manager, the *onus* would also lie on him to show a separate acquisition (*k*). And so it would be where the property was acquired by any member, if the family was joint, and there was an admitted nucleus of family property (*l*). If it was denied that there ever had been any family property, or admitted that the defendant was not the person in possession of it, the plaintiff would, I imagine, fail if he offered no evidence whatever. The amount of evidence necessary to shift upon the other side the burthen of displacing it might be very small, but would necessarily vary according to the facts of each case. On the other hand, if the property was admitted to be originally self-acquisition, but stated to have been thrown into the common stock, this would be a very good case, if made out (§ 251), but the *onus* of proving it would be heavily on the party asserting it. And so it would be if the property were admitted to have been acquired by one member without the use of family funds, but the plaintiff asserted that he had rendered such assistance as made it joint property. Even where it appeared that the family had ancestral property in their joint possession, but that some of the family acquired separate property from their own funds, and dealt with it as their own without reference to

(*i*) *Gopeekrist v. Gungapersad*, 6 M. I. A. 53; *Bissessur Lal v. Luchmessur Singh*, 6 I. A., 233.

(*k*) *Luximon Row v. Mullar Row*, 2 Kn. 60; *Pedru v. Domingo*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 8; *Janokee v. Kisto Konnul*, Marsh. 1.

(*l*) *Prankristo v. Streemutty Bhageeruttee*, 20 W. R. 158.

the other members of the family, the Privy Council held "that such a state of things may be fairly held to weaken, if not altogether to rebut, the ordinary presumption of Hindu law as to property in the name of one member of a joint family, and to throw upon those who claim as joint property that of which they have allowed their coparcener, trading and incurring liabilities on his separate account to appear to be the sole owner, the obligation of establishing their title by clear and cogent reasons" (m). *A fortiori*, where there had been admitted self-acquisitions, and an actual partition, if one of the members sued subsequently for a share of property left in the hands of one of the members as his self-acquired property, alleging that it was really joint property, the *onus* would lie upon him to make out such a case (n).

§ 264. The fourth subject of examination relates to the mode in which the joint family property is to be enjoyed by the coparceners. This must necessarily vary according to the view taken of the nature of the family corporation. In Malabar and Canara, where the property is indissoluble, the members of the family may be said rather to have rights out of the property than rights to the property. The head of the family is entitled to its entire possession, and is absolute in its management. The junior members have only a right to maintenance and residence. They cannot call for an account, except as incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that their maintenance or the family outlay should be in proportion to the income. An absolute discretion in this respect is vested in the manager (§ 217). A family governed by Mitâksharâ law is in a very similar position, except as to their right to a partition, and to an account as incident to that right. In a judgment which is constantly referred to, Lord Westbury said, "According to the true notion of an undivided family in Hindu law, no individual member of that family while it remains undivided,

Enjoyment of
family property.

Malabar.

Mitâksharâ.

(m) *Bodh Singh v. Gunesh Chunder*, 12 B. L. R. P. C. 317, 327.

(n) *Badul Singh v. Chutterdaree*, 9 W. R. 558; *Bannoo v. Kashee Ram*, (P. C.) 3 Calc. 315. See the converse case, *Kristnappa v. Ramasawmy*, 8 Mad. H. C. 25.

Bengal.

can predicate of the joint and undivided property that he, that particular member, has a certain definite share. No individual member of an undivided family could go to the place of the receipt of rent, and claim to take from the collector or receiver of the rents a certain definite share. The proceeds of undivided property must be brought, according to the theory of an undivided family, to the common chest or purse, and there dealt with according to the modes of enjoyment by the members of an undivided family" (o). The position of a joint family under Bengal law is in some respects less favourable, and in other respects, apparently, more favourable than that of a family under Mitâksharâ law. Where property is held by a father as head of an undivided family, his issue have no legal claim upon him or the property, except for their maintenance. He can dispose of it as he pleases, and they cannot require a partition (§ 221). Consequently they can neither control, nor call for an account of his management. But as soon as it has made a descent, the brothers or other coheirs hold their shares in a sort of quasi-severalty, which admits of the interest of each, while still undivided, passing on to his own representatives, male or females, or even to his assignees (p). How far this principle enlarges the rights of the co-sharers *inter se* is a matter of some obscurity. *Primâ facie* one would imagine that it would entitle each coparcener under Bengal law to do what, according to Lord Westbury, no coparcener can do under Benares law, viz., "to predicate of the joint and undivided family property that he, that particular member, has a certain definite share." But this seems hardly to be admitted by the Supreme Court of Bengal, in a passage where they laid down the following propositions as setting forth the characteristics of joint property held by an undivided family in Bengal. "First, each of the coparceners has a right to call for a partition, but until such partition takes place, and even an inchoate partition does not seem to vary the rights of the co-sharers, the whole remains

(o) *Appovier v. Rama Subba Ayan*, 11 M. I. A. 89.

(p) *Per L. J. Turner*, 6 M. I. A. 553; *Dâya Bhâga*, ii. § 28, note, xi. 1, § 25, 26; D. K. S. xi. § 2, 3, 7; 2 Dig., 104; *ante*, § 238.

common stock; the co-sharers being equally interested in every part of it. Second, on the death of an original co-sharer his heirs stand in his place, and succeed to his rights as they stood at his death; his rights may also in his lifetime pass to strangers, either by alienation, or as in the case of creditors, by operation of law; but in all cases those who come in, in the place of the original co-sharer, by inheritance, assignment or operation of law, can take only his rights as they stand, including of course the right to call for a partition. Third, whatever increment is made to the common stock whilst the estate continues joint, falls into and becomes part of that stock. On a partition it is divisible equally, no matter by what application of the common funds, or by whose exertions it may have been made; the single exception to the rule being, that on the acquisition by one co-sharer of a distinct property, with the aid only of the joint funds, the acquirer may take a double share in that property. The increment arising from the accumulations of undrawn income is obviously within the general rule" (q).

§ 265. So long as the manager of the joint family administers it for the purposes of the family, he is not under the same obligation to economise or to save, as would be the case with a paid agent or trustee. For instance, where the family concern is being wound up on a partition, the accounts must be taken upon the footing of what has been spent, and what remains, and not upon the footing of what might have been spent, if frugality and skill had been employed (r). The reason, of course, is that the manager is dealing with his own property, and if he chooses to live expensively, the remedy of the others is to come to a partition. On the other hand "he is certainly liable to make good to them their shares of all sums which he has actually misappropriated, or which he has spent for purposes other than those in which the joint family was interested. Of course no member of a joint Hindu family is liable to his co-par-

Position of
manager;

of ordinary
member of
family.

(q) *Sreemutty Soorjeemonee v. Denobundo Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. 526, 539; reversed by the P. C. upon the construction of a will, but these propositions were not disputed. See too *Chuckun Lall v. Poran Chunder*, 9 W. R. 483.

(r) *Tarachund v. Reeb Ram*, 3 Mad. H. C. 177; *Choonee Lall v. Prosunno*, Sev. 231.

ceners for anything which might have been actually consumed by him in consequence of his having a larger family to support, or of his being subject to greater expenses than the others; but this is simply because all such expenses are justly considered to be the legitimate expenses of the whole family. Thus, for instance, one member of a joint Hindu family may have a larger number of daughters to marry than the others. The marriage of each of these daughters to a suitable bridegroom is an obligation incumbent upon the whole family, so long as they continue to be joint, and the expenses incurred on account of such marriages must be necessarily borne by all the members, without any reference whatever to respective interests in the family estate" (s). Observations to the same effect were made by the Supreme Court of Bengal in the case from which I have already quoted, and they add, "We apprehend that at the present day, when personal luxury has increased, and the change of manners has somewhat modified the relations of the members of a joint family, it is by no means unusual that in the common *Khatta* book an account of the separate expenditure of each member is opened and kept against him; and that on a partition, even in the absence of fraud or exclusion, those accounts enter into the general account on which the final partition and allotment are made" (t).

Right to an
account.

§ 266. The right of each member of an undivided Hindu family to require an account of the management, has been both affirmed and denied in decisions which are not very easy to reconcile. Possibly, however, the apparent conflict may be explained, by considering the various purposes for which an account may be demanded. It is of course quite clear, that every member of the coparcenary, who is entitled to demand a partition, is also entitled to an account, as a necessary preliminary to such partition. A different question arises, where the account is sought by a member who desires to remain undivided. A claim by a continuing coparcener to have a statement furnished to him of the amount standing to his separate account, with a view to

(s) *Per Mitter, J., Abhay Chandra v. Pyari Mohun*, 5 B. L. R. 347, 349.

(t) *Streemutty Soorjeemonee v. Denobundo Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. 540.

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having that amount or any portion of it paid over to him, or carried over to a fresh account, as in the case of an ordinary partnership, would, in a family governed by Mitâksharâ law, be wholly inadmissible. The answer to such a demand would be, "You have no separate account. Your claim is limited to the use of the family property, and everything that has not been specifically set apart for you belongs to the family and not to its members." It was a claim to an account of this sort to which Jackson, J., referred, when he said, "It appears to be admitted that, although a son has a joint interest in the ancestral estate with his father, he cannot, as long as that estate remains joint, call upon his father for an account of his management of that estate; that he, for instance, could not sue his father for mesne profits for years during which it was under his father's management" (u). But it would be very different if he said, "I wish to know how the affairs of the corporation to which I belong are being managed." It certainly seems a matter of natural justice that such a demand should be complied with. The remedy which any coparcener has against mismanagement of the family property, is his right to a partition. But he cannot know whether it would be wise to exercise this right, unless he can be informed as to the state of the affairs of the family. Yet even a right to an account of this nature has in some cases been denied. The Supreme Court of Bengal in the case already referred to (x) say, "the right to demand such an account, when it exists, is incident to the right to require partition; the liability to account can only be enforced upon a partition." In one case of a Bengal family, Phear, J., drew a distinction as to the liability to account between the case of a management on behalf of a minor and on behalf of one of full years. In the former case he considered that the manager was strictly a trustee, and was bound when his trust came to an end, that is at the end of the minority, to account for the manner in which he had discharged it. But as regards adult members, he said, "the manager is merely the chairman of a committee,

Right to an
account.

(u) *Sudanund v. Bonomalee*, 6 W. R. 256, 259.

(x) *Sreemutty Soorjeemoney v. Denobundo Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. 540.

Right to an
account.

of which the family were the members. They manage the property together, and the '*karta*' is but the mouthpiece of the body, chosen and capable of being changed by themselves. Therefore, unless something is shown to the contrary, every adult member of an undivided joint family, living in commensality with the '*karta*,' must be taken, as between himself and the '*karta*,' to be a participator in, and authoriser of, all that is from time to time done in the management of the joint property to this extent, namely, that he cannot, without further cause, call the '*karta*' to account for it. Of course it may, as a matter of fact, be the case in a given family that the '*karta*' is the agent of, or stands in a fiduciary and accountable relation to one or more of the members. It would be easy to imagine a state of things under which he had become the trustee of the property relative to his adult coparcener, or in which, by reason of his fraud or other behaviour, they, some or one of them, had acquired an equity to call upon him for an account. All that I desire to say is, that, in my judgment, he does not wear this character of accountability, merely because he occupies the position of '*karta*'" (y). In this case, the plaintiff sought for the account, not merely for information, but as incidental to a claim for his share of the surpluses which such an account would show that the manager had received. The suit was not one for partition, as is evident from the fact that the entire suit was dismissed. Had he sued for a partition he would of course have been entitled to it, though on different terms as to accounting from those which he tried to impose.

§ 267. This decision was relied on in a later case, where a widow (in Bengal) sued for a partition of the property, and, as incidental thereto, for the dissolution of a banking partnership, and that the defendant, the manager, should render an account of the estate of the common ancestor, and of the banking business (z). Markby, J., said, "I am clearly of opinion that, in the ordinary case of a joint Hindu

(y) *Chuckun Lall Singh v. Poran Chunder*, 9 W. R. 483. See this case explained by Phear, J., 5 B. L. R. 354.

(z) *Ranganmani Dasi v. Kasinath Dutt*, 3 B. L. R., O. C. 1.

family, the manager of the whole, or any portion of the family property, is not, by reason of his occupying that position, bound to render any accounts whatever to the members of the family." He granted an account in the special case on the ground that the banking business was carried on, not as a common family business in the strict sense, the profits of which were all to sink into the common family fund, but rather on the footing of a partnership, the profits of which, when realised, were to be divided among the individual members in certain proportions. This decision however was directly overruled by the Full Bench, in a case where the following questions were referred for decision:—1. Whether the managing member of a joint Hindu family can be sued by the other members for an account, and (it appearing that one of the plaintiffs was a minor) 2. Whether such a suit would not lie, even if the parties suing were minors, during the period for which the accounts were asked. Mr. Justice Mitter in making the reference said, "suppose, for instance, that one of the members of a joint family, with a view to separate from the others, asks the manager what portion of the family income has been actually saved by him during the period of his managership. If the manager chooses to say that nothing has been saved, but at the same time refuses to give any account of the receipts and disbursements, which were entirely under his control, how is the member, who is desirous of separation, to know what funds are actually available for partition? And according to what principle of law or justice can it be said that he is bound to accept the *ipse dixit* of the manager as a correct representation of the actual state of things?" Both questions accordingly were answered in the affirmative. The previous decision was overruled, and that of *Chuckun Lall v. Poran Chunder* was reconciled and explained, as meaning only that joint managers must be taken to have authorised each other's acts, and therefore could not after a lapse of years call for an account by one of themselves of dealings which were in fact their own (a).

Full Bench
decision.

Right to an
account.

(a) *Abhaychandra Roy v. Pyari Mohun*, 5 B. L. R. 347.

Relief incidental
to account.

§ 268. The decision upon the two questions referred is no doubt perfectly sound. But I cannot understand the framework of the suit. The plaintiff alleged that there was real and personal property, the management of which was taken by the defendant in 1863; that although the profits were large, yet the plaintiffs had not been properly maintained; that the elder plaintiff had taken upon himself, in 1866, the management of the one-third share belonging to himself and his minor brother; he prayed for recovery of one-third share of the profits during the defendant's management from 1863 to 1866, and also for one-third share of the *personal* property. No share of the real property was asked for. The account was asked for as incidental to this claim. The defendant pleaded a partition in 1849 which was found against. The original Court gave a decree for the plaintiff for a share of the profits of the real and personal property, but not for a share of the *corpus*. This decree seems to have been in principle affirmed on appeal. It would appear then that the claim made by the plaintiff was, that a separate account should be kept in the name of each co-sharer, in which he should be credited with an aliquot share of the savings, and debited with the amount actually expended on himself, and that the balance should be paid over to him annually, or as it accumulated, whenever he chose to ask for it. It is evident that if this principle were carried out, no additions could ever be made to the family property. If the entire family chose to live up to their income, of course they could do so. But would any one member of the family have a right to insist upon living upon a scale higher than was thought suitable by the other members? Would he have a right to withdraw his own share of the income annually from the family system of management or trade, and to deal with it on his own account? If he did so, would the accumulations of such annual withdrawals, and the profits made by means of them, be his own separate property, or would they continue to be joint property? Either supposition involves a contradiction. If they became separate property, that would be in conflict with the rule that the savings of joint property, and acqui-

sitions made solely by means of joint property, continue to be joint. If they became separate, it would follow that a member of an undivided family might accumulate large separate acquisitions by simply investing portions of the family property. On the other hand, if such accumulations remained joint property, the absurdity would arise that A. might sue B. and get a decree for a thousand rupees, and B. might sue A. the very next week, to enforce a partition of that sum and recover a moiety of it.

§ 269. It is, however, quite possible that the plaint was based upon a system of family management, which is by no means uncommon, when the family continues undivided, but each member holds a portion of the property separately, and applies the income arising from it to his own use. Of course, if the portion appropriated to A. was placed in charge of B., the income would be held by him for the use of A., and he would be entitled to an account of its application, and to payment over of the balance. But this would be, not by virtue of the general usage of an undivided Hindu family, but in opposition to that usage, by virtue of a special arrangement for the apportionment of the income among the individual branches. It must be owned, however, that the language of Couch, C. J., looks as if he took a different view. He says (b), "It appears to me that the principle upon which the right to call for an account rests is not, as has been supposed, the existence of a direct agency, or of a partnership where the managing partner may be considered as the agent for his co-partners. It depends upon the right which the members of a joint Hindu family have to a share of the property; and where there is a joint interest in the property, and one party receives all the profits, he is bound to account to the other parties who have an interest in it, for the profits of their respective shares, after making such deductions as he may have the right to make." If by this the learned Chief Justice meant that he was bound to account for these profits, in the sense of paying them over, or holding them at the

Special family arrangement.

(b) 5 B. L. R. 353.

disposal of the individual members, the opinion must be founded upon a distinction between the rights of co-sharers under Bengal and Mitāksharā law. It must proceed upon the idea that the entire share of each member, and therefore its entire income, is appropriated to him, free of all claims by the others, and therefore that the manager only receives it as his agent and trustee. Such a view is certainly the logical result of Jīmūta Vāhana's theory of joint-ownership. But it is opposed to many of the judicial *dicta* already quoted.

Necessity for
joint action.

§ 270. A necessary consequence of the corporate character of the family holding is, that wherever any transaction affects that property all the members must be privy to it, and whatever is done must be done for the benefit of all, and not of any single individual. For instance, a single member cannot sue to recover a particular portion of the family property for himself, whether his claim is preferred against a stranger who is asserted to be wrongfully in possession, or against his coparceners. If the former, all the members must join, and the suit must be brought to recover the whole property for the benefit of all. And this, whether the stranger is in possession without a shadow of title, or by the act of one of the sharers, in excess of his power (c). If any of the members refuse to join as plaintiffs, they should be made defendants, so that the interests of all may be bound (d). If the suit is against the co-parceners, it is vicious at its root. The only remedy by one member against his co-sharer is by a suit for partition, as until then he has no right to the exclusive possession of any part of the property (e). The same rule forbids

(c) *Sheo Churn v. Chukraree Pershad*, 15 W. R. 436; *Cheynt Narain v. Bunwaree Singh*, 23 W. R. 395; *Parooma Moodelly v. Valoyda Moodelly*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 35; *Rajaram Tewari v. Lachman Persad*, 4 B. L. R. A. C. 118, approved *Mt. Phoolbas v. Lalla Jogeshur*, 3 I. A. at p. 26; *Biswanath Bhattacharjee v. Collector of Mymensingh*, 7 B. L. R. Appx. 42, affirmed by *F. B. Unnoda Pershad v. Erskine*, 21 W. R. 68; *Dewakur Josee v. Naroo Keshoo*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 190; *Nundun v. Lloyd*, 22 W. R. 74; *Teeluk Rai v. Ramjus Rai*, 5 N. W. P. 182; *Nathuni v. Manraj*, 2 Calc. 149.

(d) *Rajaram Tewari v. Lachman Pershad*, ub. sup.; *Juggodumba Dossee v. Haran Chunder*, 10 W. R. 109; *Gokool Pershad v. Etwaree Mahtoo*, 20 W. R. 138.

(e) *Mt. Phoolbas v. Lalla Jogeshur*, 3 I. A., 7; *Dadjee Deorao v. Wittal Deorao*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 151; *Trimbak Dixit v. Narayan Dixit*, 11 Bomb. 69; *Gobind Chunder v. Ram Coomar*, 24 W. R. 393.

one of several sharers to sue alone for the ejectment of a tenant (*f*), unless, perhaps, in a case where by arrangement with his co-parceners the plaintiff has been placed in the exclusive possession of the whole (*g*); or for his share of the rent (*h*), unless where the defendants have paid their rent to him separately, or agreed to do so, in which case they at all events could not raise the objection. Even in such a case, however, it would clearly be open to any of the other sharers to intervene, if they considered that their rights were being endangered (*i*). And so where one member of a joint family has laid out money upon any portion of the joint estate, he cannot sue his co-sharers for repayment, unless there has been an express agreement that he should be repaid. Otherwise his outlay is only a matter to be taken into account on a partition (*k*).

Suits by one co-sharer.

On the other hand, where the act of a third party with respect to the joint property has caused any personal and special loss to one of the co-sharers, which does not affect the others, he can sue for it separately, and they need not be joined (*l*).

§ 271. The rights of shareholders *inter se* depend upon the view taken by the law which governs them of their interest in the property. In the early conception of a Hindu family the right of any member consisted simply in

Rights of coparceners *inter se*.

(*f*) *Sree Chund v. Nim Chand*, 13 W. R. 337; *Alum Manjee v. Ashad Ali*, 16 W. R. 138; *Hulodhur Sen v. Gooroo Doss*, 20 W. R. 126; *Krishnarav v. Govind Trimbak*, 12 Bomb. 85; *Sobharam v. Gunga Pershad*, 2 N. W. P. 260; *Balaji v. Gopal*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 23.

(*g*) *Amir Singh v. Moazzim Ali*, 7 N. W. P. 58.

(*h*) *Indromonee v. Suroop Chunder*, 15 W. R. 395; *Hur Kishore v. Joogul Kishore*, 16 W. R. 231; *Bhyrab Mundul v. Gogaram*, 17 W. R. 408; *Annoda Churn Kally Coomar*, 4 Calc. 87.

(*i*) *Ganga Narain v. Saroda Mohun*, 3 B. L. R. A. C. 230; *Haradhun v. Ram Newaz*, 17 W. R. 414; *Saleehoonissa v. Mohesh Chunder*, ib. 452; *Sree Misser v. Crowdy*, 15 W. R. 243; *Dinobundho v. Dinonath*, 19 W. R. 168; by F. B., *Doorga Churn v. Jampa Dossee*, 12 B. L. R. 289; *Rakhal Chunder v. Mahtab Khan*, 25 W. R. 221. Of course the co-sharers might agree that the tenant should pay each of them a portion of the rent, and would then be entitled to sue separately for their respective portions. *Gunie Mahomed v. Moran*, 4 Calc. 96.

(*k*) *Nubkoomar Chowdhry v. Jye Deo Nundy*, 2 S. D. 247 (317); *Jalaludaula v. Sumsamnadaula*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 161; *Muttasawmy v. Subiramanya*, 1 Mad. H. C. 309.

(*l*) *Gopee Kishen v. Ryland*, 9 W. R. 279; *Chundee Chowdhry v. Mac-Naghten*, 23 W. R. 386.

a general right to have the property fairly managed in such a manner as to enable himself and his family to be suitably maintained out of its proceeds. The duties which he was to perform, and the profits which he was to receive, would be regulated by the discretion of the head of the family. This is at present the case in a Malabar *tarwâd* (m). Except so far as it is varied by special agreement or usage, the members of a family governed by Mitâksharâ law are still in much the same position (n). In Bengal, where the members hold rather as tenants in common than as joint tenants, a greater degree of independence is possessed by each (o). There each member is entitled to a full and complete enjoyment of his undivided share, in any proper and reasonable manner, which is not inconsistent with a similar enjoyment by the other members, and which does not infringe upon their right to an equal disposal and management of the property (p). But he cannot, without permission, do anything which alters the nature of the property, as for instance by building upon it. Where such an act is an injury to his coparceners the Court will, as a matter of discretion, though not as a matter of absolute right, direct the removal of the building (q). And the same rule has been applied where an entire change of crops has been introduced, where the produce would be valueless unless followed up by manufacture (r).

(m) *Kunigarathu v. Arrangaden*, 2 Mad. H. C. 12; *Subbu Hegadi v. Tongu*, 4 Mad. H. C. 196.

(n) See *per* Lord Westbury, *Appovier v. Rama Subbaiyan*, 11 M. I. A. p. 89; *ante*, § 264.

(o) See *per* Phear, J., *Chuckun Lall v. Poran Chunder*, 9 W. R. 483; *ante*, § 266.

(p) *Eshan Chunder v. Nund Comar*, 8 W. R. 239; *Gopee Kishen v. Hemchunder Gosain*, 13 W. R. 322; *Nundun Lall v. Lloyd*, 22 W. R. 74; *Stalkartt v. Gopal Panday*, 12 B. L. R. 197. And he may lease out his share, *Ramdebul v. Mitterjeet*, 17 W. R. 420.

(q) *Jankee Singh v. Bukhooree*, S. D. of 1856, 761; *Inderdeonarain v. Toolseenaarain*, S. D. of 1857, 765; *Guru Dass v. Bijaya Gobinda*, 1 B. L. R. A. C. 108; *Sheopershad v. Leela Singh*, 12 B. L. R. 188 (see *Lala Biswambar v. Rajaram*, 3 B. L. R. Appx. 67, where such a decree was refused, and *Nobin Chunder v. Mohesh Chunder*, 12 W. R. 69); *Holloway v. Mahomed Ali*, 16 W. R. 140 (see apparently *contra*, *Dwarkanath v. Gopeenath*, 16 W. R. 10); *Mehdee Hossein v. Anjud Ali*, 6 N. W. P. 259.

(r) *Crowdie v. Bhikdaree Singh*, 16 W. R. 41.

§ 272. There is nothing to prevent one co-sharer being the tenant of all the others, and paying rent to them as such. But the mere fact that one member of the family holds exclusive occupation of any part of the property, carries with it no undertaking to pay rent, in the absence of some agreement to that effect, either express or implied (s).

Coparcener may be tenant.

(s) *Sreemutty Alladinee v. Sreenath Chunder*, 20 W. R. 258; *Gobind Chunder v. Ram Coomar*, 24 W. R. 393.

CHAPTER IX.

DEBTS.

§ 273. I HAVE thought it well to treat the subject of Debts, as affecting property, before that of voluntary alienations, as it illustrates a principle which is constantly recurring in Hindu law, viz., that moral obligations take precedence of legal rights; or, to put the same idea in different words, that legal rights are taken subject to the discharge of moral obligations.

Three sources of liability.

The liability of one person to pay debts contracted by another arises from three completely different sources, which must be carefully distinguished. These are—first, the religious duty of discharging the debtor from the sin of his debts:—secondly, the moral duty of paying a debt contracted by one whose assets have passed into the possession of another:—thirdly, the legal duty of paying a debt contracted by one person as the agent, express or implied, of another. Cases may often occur in which more than one of these grounds of liability are found co-existing, but any one is sufficient.

Debts of father :

§ 274. The first ground of liability only arises in the case of a debtor and his own sons and grandsons. In the view of Hindu lawyers, a debt is not merely an obligation but a sin, the consequences of which follow the debtor into the next world. Vṛihaspati says, “He who having received a sum lent or the like, does not repay it to the owner, will be born hereafter in his creditor’s house, a slave, a servant, a woman, or a quadruped” (a). And Nârada says, “when a devotee, or a man who maintained a sacrificial fire, dies without having discharged his debt, the whole merit of his

devotions, or of his perpetual fire, belongs to his creditors” (b). The duty of relieving the debtor from these evil consequences falls on his male descendants, to the second generation, and was originally quite independent of the receipts of assets. Nârada says, “The grandson shall pay the debt of their grandfather, which having been legitimately inherited by the sons has not been paid by them; the obligation ceases with the fourth descendant (c). Fathers desire offspring for their own sake, reflecting, ‘this son will redeem me from every debt whatsoever due to superior and inferior beings.’ Therefore a son begotten by him should relinquish his own property, and assiduously redeem his father from debt, lest he fall into a region of torment” (d). Vṛihaspati states a further distinction as to the degrees of liability which attached to the descendants. “The father’s debt must be first paid, and next a debt contracted by the man himself; but the debt of the paternal grandfather must even be paid before either of these. The sons must pay the debt of their father, when proved, as if it were their own, or with interest; the son’s son must pay the debt of his grandfather, but without interest; and his son shall not be compelled to discharge it;” to which the gloss is added, “unless he be heir and have assets” (e). Finally Yājñavalkya adds an exception to these rules: that the son is not liable to pay if the father’s estate is actually held by another; as, for instance, if he is from any cause incapacitated from succession (f).

Liability of son independent of assets :

§ 276. The law as administered in our Courts, in all the provinces except Bombay, holds the heir only liable to the extent of the assets he has inherited from the person whose debts he is called on to pay (g). But as soon as the property is inherited a liability *pro tanto* arises, and is not

Now limited to assets.

(b) Nârada, iii. § 10. The text of Manu, xi. § 66, which Jagannâtha cites (1 Dig. 267) as referring to a money debt, seems to refer to the three debts which are elsewhere spoken of, viz., reading the Vedas, begetting a son, and performing sacrifices. See Manu, vi. § 36, 37, ix. § 106; Vishnu, xv. § 45.

(c) This is counted inclusive of the debtor, 1 Dig. 302; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 90.

(d) Nârada, iii. § 4—6. According to the Thesawaleme (i. § 7), sons were also bound to pay their father’s debts, even without assets.

(e) 1 Dig. 265; Kâtyâyana, 1 Dig. 301; V. May., v. 4, § 17.

(f) 1 Dig. 270; V. May., v. 4, § 16; Kâtyâyana, 1 Dig. 273.

(g) *Rayappa v. Ali Sahib*, 2 Mad. H. C. 336; *Karuppen v. Veriyal*, 4 Mad.

removed by the subsequent loss or destruction of the property, and still less, of course, by the fact that the heir has alienated it after the death (*h*). In Bombay, however, the stricter rule was applied, that a son was liable to pay his father's debts with interest, and a grandson those of his grandfather without interest, even though no assets had been inherited; but the Courts held that the rights of the creditor could only be enforced against the property of the descendant, and not against his person (*i*). But in that presidency, also, the law has been brought into conformity with the more equitable rule observed elsewhere by legislation (*k*).

Evidence of
assets.

§ 277. As regards the onus of proof that assets have come to the hands of the heir, it has been ruled by the Madras High Court, that the plaintiff must in the first instance give such evidence as would *primâ facie* afford reasonable grounds for an inference, that assets had, or ought to have, come to the hands of the defendant. But when the plaintiff has laid this foundation for his case, it will then lie on the defendant to show that the amount of the assets is not sufficient to satisfy the plaintiff's claim, or that they were of such a nature that the plaintiff was not entitled to be satisfied out of them, or that there never were any assets, or that they have been duly administered and disposed of in satisfaction of other claims. The mere fact of a certificate having been taken out was held not to be even *primâ facie* evidence of the possession of assets. But the Court refused to offer any opinion whether the same rule would apply since the Stamp Act, which made it necessary that the amount of assets to be administered under the certificate should be apparent from it (*l*). As to the doubt expressed by the High Court as to the effect of the stamp, it is probable that

H. C. 1; *Aga Hajee Mahomed v. Juggut Seat*, Montr. 272; *Jamoonah v. Mudden Day*, ib. 227; *Dyamonee v. Brindabun*, S. D. of 1856, 97; *Kunhya Lall v. Bukhtawar*, 1 W. N. P. (S. D.) 3.

(*h*) *Kasi Lakshmipati v. Buchireddy*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 78; *Unnapoorna v. Gunga Narain*, 2 W. R. 296.

(*i*) *Pranvullubh v. Deocrisn*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 4; *Hurbojee v. Hurgovind*, Bellasis, 76; *Narasimharav v. Antaji*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 64.

(*k*) Bombay Act VII of 1866; *Sakharam v. Govind Vaman*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 361; *Udaram v. Ranu Panduji*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 76.

(*l*) *Kottala Uppi v. Shangara Varma Rajah*, 3 Mad. H. C. 161; *Joogul Kishore v. Kalee Churn*, 25 W. R. 224.

they would have given the same decision had it been necessary to decide the point. The primary object of a certificate is to collect debts, and the stamp would be assessed on the value of these. But this would be no evidence that the assets had been realised.

§ 278. The liability of the son is also stated by the old writers to arise not only after the actual death of the father, but after his civil death, as when he has become an anchorite, or when he has been twenty years abroad, in which case his death may be presumed, or when he is wholly immersed in vice, which is explained by Jagannâtha as indicating a state of combined insolvency and insolence, in which the father being devoted to sensual gratifications, gives up all attempts to satisfy his creditors, and sets them at defiance (*m*). And so when the father is suffering from some incurable disease, or is mad or extremely aged (*n*). But I imagine that no suit could now be brought against sons, based solely on their liability to pay the debt of their father, until he was either actually or civilly dead, so that the estate had legally vested in the sons. In a Madras case where a son, living apart from his father, was sued for his father's debt during the life of the latter, the Pandits being questioned as to his liability replied, "The Hindu law-books, *Vijñaneśvareyum*, etc., do not declare that the debt contracted by a person shall be discharged by his wife and son, while the said person is alive, is residing in his own village, and is still capable of carrying on business" (*o*). And in a later case, where the plaintiff sought to recover from the wife and brothers of the obligor of a bond, not on the ground of any personal liability, but as the representatives of the obligor, who was supposed to be dead, the Court held that no suit could be maintained before the lapse of the time which raised the legal presumption of the death of the obligor, unless there was proof of special circumstances which warranted the inference of the death within a shorter period (*p*).

Liability arises after father's death.

(*m*) *Vishṇu*, 1 Dig. 266 ; *Yājñavalkya*, ib. 268 ; 2 *Stra. H. L.* 277 ; 2 *W. MacN.* 282.

(*n*) *Kātyāyana* ; *Vṛhaspati*, 1 Dig. 277, 278.

(*o*) *Chennapah v. Chellamanah*, *Mad. Dec.* of 1851, p. 33.

(*p*) *Karuppen v. Veriyal*, 4 *M. H. C.* 1. Here, however, the supposed liability rested on possession of the estate.

And in Bombay the Court refused to enforce the debt of a father against the son's share of the ancestral property during his life, notwithstanding the *futwahs* of the Pandits asserting his liability in pursuance of the above passages (q).

Obligation is religious.

§ 279. In all the above cases, as has been already observed, the liability to pay the father's debt arises from the moral and religious obligation to rescue him from the penalties arising from the non-payment of his debts. And this obligation equally compels the son to carry out what the ancestor has promised for religious purposes (r). It follows then, that when the debt creates no such moral obligation the son is not bound to repay it, even though he possess assets. This arises in two cases, 1st, when the debt is of an immoral character; 2nd, when it is of a ready-money character.

Cases in which it does not arise.

"The sons are not compellable to pay sums due by their father for spirituous liquors, for losses at play, for promises made without any consideration, or under the influence of lust or of wrath; or sums for which he was a surety (except in the cases before mentioned), or a fine or a toll, or the balance of either," nor generally, "any debt for a cause repugnant to good morals" (s). Jagannâtha denies that a son is not liable for the debts of his father as surety, and says with much reason, that if by a toll is meant one payable at a wharf or the like, that is a cause consistent with usage and good morals and it ought to be paid (t). Another meaning of the word "*Çulka*," translated toll, is a nuptial present, given as the price of a bride, and this has been determined not to be repayable by the son, apparently on the ground that it constitutes the essence of one of the unlawful forms of marriage (u). Sir Thomas Strange takes

(q) *Amrut Row v. Trimbuck Row*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 218.

(r) *Kátyâyana*, 1 Dig. 299.

(s) *Vrihaspati*, *Gautama*, 1 Dig. 305; *Vyâsa*, ib. 305; *Kátyâyana*, ib. 300, 309; *Yâjñavalkya*, ib. 311; 2 W. MacN. 210.

(t) 1 Dig. 305, acc. *Manu*, viii. § 159, 160. As regards suretyship, the son's liability has been expressly affirmed. *Moolchund v. Krishna*, Bellasis, 54. As regards fines, the reason is given "that a son is not liable for a penalty incurred by his father in expiation of an offence; for neither sins nor the expiation of them are hereditary, 1 Bor. 90; analogous to the principle of English Law that an action for a tort does not survive.

(u) *Keshow Row v. Naro Junardhun*, 2 Bor. 194.

the term in its natural signification, and explains the non-liability on the ground that such payments are of a ready-money character, for which no credit is, or at all events ought to be given (*x*).

§ 280. It also follows that the obligation of the son to pay the debt is not founded on any assumed benefit to himself or to the estate, arising from the origin of the debt; still less is that obligation affected by the nature of the estate, which has descended to the son, as being ancestral or self-acquired. "Unless the debt was of such a nature that it was not the duty of the son to pay it, the discharge of it, even though it affected ancestral estate, would still be an act of pious duty in the son. By the Hindu law, the freedom of the son from the obligation to discharge the father's debt, has reference to the nature of the debt, and not to the nature of the estate, whether ancestral or acquired by the creator of the debt" (*y*). And as such a debt would be binding upon the son after the father's death, so a sale by the father for the purpose of paying off such a debt will bind a son, even under the Mitāksharā or Mithilā law. This was so decided by the Privy Council under the following circumstances. Certain property descended from Kunhya Lall to his two sons, Bhikaree and Bhujrung. The former of the two had a son, Kantoo. The family was governed by Mithilā law, and therefore, the property being ancestral, Kantoo acquired an interest in it by his birth. Subsequently to his birth Bhikaree executed a bond, upon which judgment was obtained, and his share of the property was attached. To pay off this judgment a portion of the property was sold by both brothers. It does not appear that Bhikaree's bond was in any respect for the benefit of the family, or that the sale of the property was for the family benefit, except in so far as it went to satisfy the decree, and except as to a small portion which was applied in payment of Government revenue. Kantoo Lall sued to set aside the sale, as not being for his benefit or with his

Debt need not be beneficial.

Ancestral estate equally liable,

even in father's lifetime.

(*x*) 1 Stra. H. L. 166.

(*y*) 6 M. I. A. 421; S. D. of 1861, p. 222, cited 1 I. A. 332; 3 Mad. H. C. 306; *Suraj Bansi Koer v. Sheo Pooshad Singh*, 6 I. A., 58.

*Girdharee Lall
v. Kantoo Lall.*

consent. A similar suit was brought by Mahabeer, the son of Bhujrung. The High Court dismissed Mahabeer's suit, on the ground that he was not born at the time the deed of sale was executed, but awarded to Kantoo Lall one-half of his father's share. The Privy Council reversed this decree. They remarked in their judgment, "It is said that they (Bhikaree and Bhujrung) could not sell the property, because before the deed of sale was executed, Kantoo Lall was born, and by reason of his birth, under the Mithilâ law, he had acquired an interest in that property. Now it is important to consider what was the interest which Kantoo Lall acquired. Did he gain such an interest in this property as prevented it from being liable to pay a debt which his father had contracted? If his father had died, and had left him as his heir, and the property had come into his hands, could he have said that because this was ancestral property which descended to his father from his grandfather, it was not liable at all to pay his father's debts?" They then quoted the passage above referred to (6 M. I. A. 421) and proceeded, "that is an authority to show that ancestral property which descended to a father under the Mitâksharâ law is not exempted from liability to pay his debts because a son is born to him. It would be a pious duty on the part of the son to pay his father's debts, and it being the pious duty to pay his father's debts, the ancestral property, in which the son, as the son of his father, acquires an interest by birth, is liable to the father's debts. The rule is, as stated by L. J. Knight Bruce, "the freedom of the son from the obligation to discharge the father's debt has respect to the nature of the debt, and not to the nature of the estate, whether ancestral or acquired by the creator of the debt." It is necessary, therefore, to see what was the nature of the debt for the payment of which it was necessary to raise money by the sale of the property in question. If the debt of the father had been contracted for an immoral purpose, the son might not have been under any pious obligation to pay it; and he might possibly object to those estates which had come to the father as ancestral property being made liable to the debt. That was not the case here. It was not

shown that the bond upon which the decree was obtained was given for an immoral purpose: it was a bond given apparently for an advance of money, upon which an action was brought. The bond had been substantiated in a Court of Justice; there was nothing to show that it was given for an immoral purpose; and the holder recovered a decree upon it. There is no suggestion either that the bond or the decree was obtained *benamee* for the benefit of the father, or merely for the purpose of enabling the father to sell the family property, and raise money for his own purpose. On the contrary, it was proved that the purchase-money for the estate was paid into the bankers of the fathers, and credit was given to them with the bankers for the amount, and that the money was applied partly to pay off the decree, partly to pay off a balance which was due from the fathers to the bankers, and partly to pay government revenue; and then there was some small portion of which the application was not accounted for. But it is not because a small portion is unaccounted for that the son has a right to turn out the *bonâ fide* purchaser who gave value for the estate, and to recover possession of it with mesne profits. Even if there was no necessity to raise the whole purchase-money, the sale would not be wholly void" (z).

§ 281. A father's debts are a first charge upon the inheritance, and must be paid in full before there can be any surplus for division (a). As between the parceners themselves, the burthen of the debts is to be shared in the same proportion as the benefit of the inheritance. But, except by special arrangement with the creditors, the whole property, and all the heirs are liable jointly and severally (b). Where, however, a father has separated from his sons, the whole of his property will descend at his death to an after-born son. Therefore all debts contracted by him subsequent to the

Mode of adjustment.

(z) *Girdharee Lall v. Kantoo Lall*, 1 I. A. 321, 330; *Narayana Chariar v. Narso Krishna*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 262; *per curiam*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 498; *Muddun Gopal v. Mt. Gowrunbutty*, 15 B. L. R. 264. As to what are immoral debts, see *Budree Lall v. Kantee Lall*, 23 W. R. 260; *Shah Wajid Hossein v. Nankoo Singh*, 25 W. R. 311; *Luchmi Dai v. Asman Singh*, 2 Calc. 213.

(a) *Nārada*, xiii. § 32; *Dāya Bhāga*, i. § 47, 48; V. May., iv. § 6; *Tara-chund v. Reeb Ram*, 3 Mad. H. C. 177, 181.

(b) *Kātyāyana*, 1 Dig. 291; *Nārada*, iii. § 2; *Vishnu*, 1 Dig. 288; D. K. S. vii. § 26—28; 2 *Śtra. H. L.* 283.

partition will in the first instance be payable by that son. But Jagannâtha is of opinion that even in such a case, if the after-born son has not property sufficient to pay the debts, they should be discharged by the separated sons (c). This would certainly have been the case under the old law, when the possession of assets was not necessary in order to render the sons liable. But it is probable that a different view would be taken now, when the creditor must show that the son's estate has been enlarged by the death, to the full extent of the liability attempted to be imposed.

Obligation
arising from
possession of
assets.

§ 282. *Secondly*; the obligation to pay the debts of the person whose estate a man has taken, is declared with equal positiveness. It does not rest, as in the case of sons, upon any duty to 'relieve the deceased at any cost, but upon the broad equity that he who takes the benefit should take the burthen also (d). And it is evident that this obligation attached whether the property devolved upon an heir by operation of law, or whether it was taken by him voluntarily, as an executor *de son tort* as an English lawyer would say; for the liability is said to arise equally whether a man takes possession of the estate of another or only of his wife. As Nârada says, "He who takes the wife of a poor and sonless dead man becomes liable for his debts, for the wife is considered as the dead man's property" (e). Even the widow is not bound to pay her husband's debts, unless she is his heir, or has promised to pay them, or has been a joint contractor with him (f).

"Assets are to be pursued into whatever hands. See Nârada, cited by Jagannâtha, 1 Dig. 272. And innumerable other authorities may be cited were it requisite in so plain a case." This is the remark of Mr. Colebrooke, approving of a Madras pandit's *futwah*, that where uncle

(c) Vrihaspati, 1 Dig. 279; D. K. S. v. § 16—18.

(d) "He who has received the estate of a proprietor leaving no son, must pay the debts of the estate, or, on failure of him, the person who takes the wife of the deceased." Yājñavalkya, 1 Dig. 270; Kātyāyana, ib. 273, 330; Vrihaspati, ib. 274. "Of the successor to the estate, the guardian of the widow, or the son, he who takes the estate becomes liable for the debts." Nârada, iii. § 18, 25; Gautama, cited 2 W. MacN. 284; 1 Dig. 314.

(e) Nârada, iii. § 21—26; *ante*, § 69.

(f) Nârada, iii. § 17; Yājñavalkya, Vishnu, 1 Dig. 313; Kātyāyana, 1 Dig. 315; 2 W. MacN. 283, 286.

and nephew were undivided members, and the nephew borrowed money and died, leaving his property in the hands of the uncle's widow, she might be sued for the debt (g). So in Bombay, a suit was maintained on an account current with a deceased debtor against his widow and three other persons, strangers by family, on the ground that they had taken possession of his property, but they were held only liable to the extent to which they became possessed of the property (h). In each of these cases the person in possession of the property held it without any title or consideration, like an executor *de son tort* in England. On the other hand, in a Madras case, where the plaintiff sued on a bond by the first defendant's husband, and joined the second defendant, his son-in-law, as being in possession of the property, and judgment was given against both, the Sudr Court reversed the decision against the second defendant, observing, "that he is not in the line of the first defendant's husband's heirs, and that although property derived by him from the deceased debtor may in execution be made liable for the debt, his possession of the property does not render him personally responsible" (i). Now if a decree had been obtained during his lifetime against the debtor, it might, of course, have been executed against his property in the hands of the son-in-law. But it is difficult to see in what way the property could have been got at in the hands of the second defendant, except by a suit to which he was a party (k). In a suit against the widow she could only have been made liable to the extent of the assets she had received. According to English law, an administratrix might also be made liable to the extent of the assets which, but for her wilful default, she might have received, and if she chose to leave them in the hands of her son-in-law, this would be a wilful default. But I doubt whether a Hindu widow is bound to bring suits against third parties to recover assets for the benefit of creditors (l). It seems

Obligation
arising from
possession of
estate.

(g) 2 Stra. H. L. 282.

(h) *Kupurchund v. Dadabhoy*, Morris, Pt. II. 126.

(i) *Amanchi v. Manchiraz*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 73.

(k) See *post*, § 551.

(l) See 2 W. MacN. 286, where a man left a widow, who was clearly his heir.

to me that the son-in-law was properly joined in order to enable him to show that he had no property of the deceased, or that he held the property for value. And so in Calcutta, where the half-brother of the deceased was sued jointly with his sons for a debt, the Court held that he could not be liable as heir, which he manifestly was not, but that he would have been liable, if it had been shown that he had possessed himself of any of the property of the deceased (m).

Liability is personal.

Debts are not a charge upon the estate.

§ 283. In some early cases this principle was pushed so far that it was even held that an heir could not alienate property which had descended to him, while the debts of the deceased were unpaid. That is, that a simple debt immediately on death acquired all the force of a specific mortgage (n). But this view has been denounced by more recent decisions, and it is now held, "that the property of a deceased Hindu is not so hypothecated for his debt as to prevent his heir from disposing of it to a third party, or to allow a creditor to follow it, and take it out of the hands of a third party, who has purchased in good faith and for valuable consideration. The creditor may hold the heir personally liable for the debt, if he have alienated the property, but he cannot follow the property" (o). The same ruling has been applied by the High Court of Bengal, in a case where it was attempted to make a devisee liable for the debts of the testator, in respect of his possession of part of the estate. The Court held that no such liability attached, whether his possession had commenced before the death as by gift, or after the death as by bequest (p). The case was argued purely upon principles of English law, which of course had little bearing upon the point. It has, however, been held in Madras, that a voluntary transfer of property by way of gift, if made *bonâ fide*, and not with the intention of defrauding creditors, is

But his father and brothers appropriated his property. The pandit said that they and not the widow were bound to pay his debts.

(m) *Rampertab Chowdhry v. Gopee Kishen*, Sev. 101.

(n) *Iuggah Fattajee v. Trimbuck Herjee*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 33; *Kishundass v. Keshoo Wulud Bapoojee*, Morris, Pt. II. 108.

(o) *Unnopoorina Dasea v. Gunga Narain*, 2 W. R. 296; *Jamiyatram v. Parbhudas*, 9 Bomb. H. C. 116; *Lukshman Ramchandra v. Saravati*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 78.

(p) *Ram Oottum v. Oomesh Chunder*, 21 W. R. 155.

valid against creditors (q). What the deceased could have done during his life, it would probably be held, he could also do by will, unless a specific lien had attached to the property. And so a gift by the heir would probably also be held valid in favour of the donee, though, of course, such a gift would in no degree lessen his own liability to the creditors (§ 276). The Bombay High Court, in *Jamiyatram v. Parbhudas* (r), say that Mr. Colebrooke laid the proposition down too broadly that the assets of the debtor may be pursued into whatsoever hands they may come, and they rather indicate an opinion that this rule only applies to those who take the inheritance as heirs. The case before them, however, was one of a purchaser for value. There is nothing to show that they would have exonerated a person who took the estate after the death by his own voluntary act, and without a title derived either from the deceased, or from the representatives of the deceased.

§ 284. Another question arises, how far the liability to pay debts out of assets prevails against the right of survivorship, in cases where the debtor does not stand in the relation of paternal ancestor to the heir. In this case the moral and religious obligation has vanished, and it is a mere conflict of two legal rights. It will be seen hereafter (§ 311) that in cases under the Mitâksharâ law there is a strong body of authority in favour of the view, that an undivided coparcener cannot dispose of his share of the joint property, unless in a case of necessity, without the consent of his coparceners. But it may now be taken as settled by the Privy Council, that even if this be so, still a creditor who has obtained a judgment against him for his separate debt, may enforce it during his life by seizure and sale of his undivided interest in the joint property (s). But that decision left open the further question, whether the creditor loses his rights against the undivided share of the debtor, if the latter dies before judgment against him, and seizure in satisfaction of it? In other words, do those who take by

Liability of coparcener taking by survivorship.

(q) *Gnanabhai v. Srinavasa Pillay*, 4 Mad. H. C. 84.

(r) 9 Bomb. H. C. 116.

(s) *Deendyal v. Jugdeep Narain*, 4 I. A. 247. As to the mode of enforcing such a decree, see *post*, 309.

✓ survivorship take subject to the equities existing between their deceased co-sharer and his creditors? I say *equities*, because it is quite clear that a debt is not a lien, but only a cause of action which may be enforced by way of execution.

2 This question has been decided against the creditor by the High Courts of Bombay, Madras, and the North-west Provinces, and the tendency of the Calcutta High Court seems to be the same way.

§ 285. In Madras a suit was brought against a father on the bond of his deceased son. He pleaded non-liability, as he had not inherited any property from his deceased son. The original Court dismissed the suit—on what ground does not appear. The Civil Judge declared for the plaintiff, on the ground that the money for which the bond was given was borrowed for the use of the family. This of course was a perfectly sound reason. A special appeal was admitted, to determine if the Civil Judge was correct in viewing the debt as a family one. The original decree was ultimately affirmed. The Judgment stated that “the Court of Sudr Udalut are of opinion that the decree of the Moofly Sudr Amin was passed upon sound grounds, and that the Civil Judge has erred in law in making the defendant liable for the bond sued on. The first defendant was the head of the house, and a bond by the deceased, his son, could not be binding on the first defendant or on the family property” (t). It would appear from this decision that the Court found that the bond was not for a family purpose. But there evidently was family property, and the father took by survivorship his son’s share. That share might have been bound during the son’s lifetime, but the three Courts were obviously of opinion that it could not be so bound after his death. The father’s plea was that he had not inherited from his son. He could only have inherited from him if the son had had separate or self-acquired property.

Decisions in
Madras.

(t) *Muttucomarappa v. Hinnoo Chetty*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 183. See too the *futwah* in 2 MacN. p. 279, case iii., where the pandits thought that the liability of a deceased son for his separate debt did not survive against the coparcenary. Mr. W. H. MacNaghten, however, treats it as unquestionable that it would, p. 280. n.

§ 286. Another Madras case was exactly the converse of the above. The plaintiff sued the maker of a bond, as first defendant, and his father and brother as second and third defendants. Pending suit, first defendant died. The Moon-siff found against the second and third defendants, on the ground that they had inherited property from the deceased. The Subordinate Judge submitted to the Sudr Pandits the following question. "A. has two sons, B. and C., living unmarried under his protection. B. contracts a debt without his knowledge and sanction and dies. Are A. and C. bound to liquidate the debt?" This question the pandits necessarily answered in the negative, on which the Civil Judge dismissed the suit. The Sudr Court reversed this judgment, and remanded the suit for a decision, whether the property derived by the second and third defendants from the first was the individual acquisition of the latter. They observed, "that the answer of the law officers upon which the Subordinate Judge has given his decree is based upon a question put to them not embracing the full facts of the case. The plaintiff's demand upon the second and third defendants is made, not only on the ground of their relationship to the deceased first defendant, but upon their having succeeded to property of his individual acquisition. The said question to the pandits sets forth merely the relationship of the parties, without notice of the derivation by the survivors of property from the deceased. It is clear therefore that the answer absolving the second and third defendants from liability for the first defendant's debts does not meet the full merits of the case" (u). Here also it is assumed that no decree could be granted against the surviving members of a joint family in respect of their possession of his undivided share.

§ 287. The point arose directly for decision in Bombay, under the following circumstances. A father and son were in possession of a shop which was ancestral property. The son contracted a separate debt and died, and the creditor obtained a decree against the father and widow for payment of the debt "out of the property and effects" of the deceased

Bombay decision.

(u) *Ragonadha Reddy v. Rungappah*, Mad. Dec. of 1859, 44.

son, and then sued the father for a declaration that the son's share of the shop was liable in the father's hands for the son's debt.

The District Judge, reversing the decision of the Subordinate Judge, found for the plaintiff. The High Court reversed his decision in an elaborate judgment. After reviewing and approving of the cases which decided that an undivided Hindu might sell his share in the estate, and that it might be seized in execution during his lifetime, they proceeded to say :

*Udaram v. Ranu
Panduji.*

"The District Judge further said, 'It is also undoubted that the divided share of a Hindu would be liable to be sold after his death in execution of a decree obtained against his heir.' In that proposition we fully agree. The divided share of a Hindu in property which had previously belonged to the united estate, is separate estate, and like any other estate held in severalty (such for instance as self-acquired property) is assets, while yet in the hands of the heir, for payment of the debts of the deceased proprietor (x). We say 'while yet in the hands of the heir,' because it is not so hypothecated for the debts of the deceased that the heir may not, for valuable consideration, dispose of it effectually before attachment. The purchaser in such case would be protected, but the heir would, of course, be responsible for the purchase-money." They then notice the doctrine that, except in certain special cases, the whole of the undivided family estate would be, when in the hands of the sons or grandsons, liable to the debts of the father or grandfather, and say : "There is not any authority for the converse of that proposition, viz., that the father or grandfather is responsible for the debts of the son or grandson independently of the receipt of assets." Kātyāyana says, "By the general rule of law, a father need not pay the debt of his son ; but he must pay it, if at the time of the loan, or afterwards, he promised payment" (1 Dig. Bk. I. ch. v. § 215, p. 317). There has not been any such promise

(x) See *per Holloway, J.*, 3 Mad. H. C. 181. "As all the property which descended was self-acquired, there is no doubt whatever that his estate is, in the hands of the heirs, liable for those debts."

proved here. The proposition which we find in the books of Hindu law, that debts follow the assets into whosoever hands they come, must, generally speaking, be confined to separate estate. There is special mention made of the circumstances under which the joint family estate or the coparceners of the debtor are responsible for his debts." (Quoting cases where the debt was incurred for the benefit of the family.) "The liability of undivided ancestral estate, in the hands of the sons and grandsons, to the debts of the father or grandfather is also exceptional, and is provided for by special texts, to some of which we have already referred. That it is exceptional is clearly deducible from the following text of Nārada (1 Dig. p. 267): 'A father being dead, his sons, whether after partition or before it, shall discharge his debt in proportion to their shares, or that son alone who has taken the burthen upon himself.'" The words "after partition or before it" and the word "shares," here show that the author was treating of ancestral property, and that he felt it necessary expressly to declare its liability to the debts of the father, whether or not it was undivided; *i.e.*, after partition or before it. And Yājñavalkya (*ibid.* p. 333) says, "A debt secured merely by a written contract, shall be discharged from a moral and religious obligation only by three persons, the debtor, his son, and his son's son; but a pledge shall be enjoyed until actual payment of the debt by any heir in any degree." That, generally speaking, undivided family property is not, in the hands of surviving coparceners, liable to the separate debt of a deceased coparcener, *i.e.*, a debt not incurred on behalf of the family, was decided in *Goor Pershad v. Sheodin* (4 N. W. P. H. C. 137), a much stronger case, so far as the creditor was concerned, than the present one. The parcener's share in a house, which was undivided family property, was attached in his lifetime, under a decree obtained against him for his separate bond debt. He died before any sale under the attachment. The High Court of the North-west Provinces affirmed the ruling of the Courts below, which discharged the attachment on the ground that Mahadev at his death "left no right at all in the house, and that there was nothing, therefore, in con-

Liability of coparcener taking by survivorship.

nection with it which was liable to be sold" for the purpose of satisfying the plaintiff's claim. "To that extent we fully concur in that decision; but there were remarks made by the Court in that case as to the inalienability of a share in undivided estate, which would not be applicable in this Presidency. In the present case, neither the decree sought to be executed against the family property nor the attachment was made in the lifetime of Dhondu. His share had ceased before either of these events. It is not proved that any separate estate of the son has devolved upon the father. The shop, upon which the plaintiffs seek to fasten their claim, has throughout been in the possession of the father; and although the son was jointly interested in it, it is not pretended that the son ever even demanded, much less obtained, a partition of it. The right of the son to a share in it, as being ancestral property, had come into existence at his birth, and it died with him. The plaintiffs therefore cannot make it available for their claim" (y).

Madras decision.

§ 288. An exactly similar case lately occurred in Madras, where a suit was brought against the deceased, upon his separate debt, and a decree was obtained against him. He died before execution, and a suit was then brought by the decree holder, against his undivided cousin, to enforce the decree against the share of the property to which the deceased had been entitled. The decisions in the N. W. Provinces and Bombay were cited, and the plaintiff's suit dismissed. The Chief Justice said, "I am not aware that it can be contended that the undivided interest of a coparcener, which passes by survivorship to the other coparceners by his death, can be proceeded against in execution. A distinction must be made between a specific charge on the land, and a general decree which is merely personal. Every debt which a man incurs is not necessarily a charge upon the estate, and there is no reason for saying that a man who has obtained judgment against an undivided member of a joint family, has established a charge upon the

(y) *Udaram Sitaram v. Rann Pandurji*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 76, 83, followed in *Narsinhbat v. Chenapa*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 479.

property" (z). In Calcutta the point has not, as yet, arisen in such a way as to call for a decision. But in *Sadabart Prasad Sahu v. Foolbash Koer*, Peacock, C. J., while expressly leaving the point open, intimated a very strong opinion against the claim of the creditor, on the ground that he could only enforce a claim for the separate debt of the deceased coparcener against his separate estate, or at all events against his separable interest in the joint estate, but that at the moment of his death his interest passed by survivorship among all the coparceners; therefore there was no longer anything of his to seize. What had been his was held by others in their own right, and not as his representatives (a).

Dictum of High Court of Bengal.

§ 289. The third, and only remaining ground of liability, is that of agency, express or implied. Mere relationship, however close, creates no obligation. Parents are not bound to pay the debts of their son, nor a son the debt of his mother. A husband is not bound to pay the debts of his wife, nor the wife the debts of her husband (b). Still less, of course, can any member of a family be bound to pay the debts of a divided member, contracted after partition, for such a state of things wholly negatives the idea of agency (c). It would be different if he had become the heir of the debtor, or taken possession of his assets. On the other hand, all the members of the family, and therefore all their property, divided or undivided, will be liable for debts which have been contracted on behalf of the family by one who was authorised to contract them (d). The most common case is that of debts created by the manager of the family. He is, *ex officio*, the accredited agent of the family, and authorised to bind them for all proper and necessary purposes, within the scope of his agency (e). But the liabi-

Cases of agency.

(z) *Koopookonan v. Chinnayen*, 1 Mad. Reporter, 63.

(a) 3 B. L. R. F. B. 34—37. See *per curiam*, 4 I. A. 253.

(b) *Nārada*, iii. § 11, 17, 19; *Yājñavalkya*, *Vishnu*, 1 Dig. 313; *Vrihaspati*, 1 Dig. 316; *Kātyāyana*, 1 Dig. 317; *Mootoo Coomarappa v. Hinnoo*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 183.

(c) *Narayana v. Rayappa*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 51.

(d) *Manu*, viii. § 166. I presume that as in the case of partnership debts, the joint property would be primarily liable, and the separate property only in case it proved insufficient.

(e) What are such necessary purposes will be examined fully in the next chapter, § 300.

Cases of agency. lity of the family is not limited to contracts made, or debts incurred by him. "The householder is liable for whatever has been spent for the benefit of the family by the pupil, apprentice, slave, wife, agent or commissioned servant" (*f*). Of course this implies that the persons referred to have acted either with an express authority, or under circumstances of such pressing necessity that an authority may be implied. Nārada says, "Debts contracted by the wife never fall upon the husband, unless they were contracted for necessities at a time of distress, for the household expenses have to be defrayed by the man" (*g*). *A fortiori* the husband is liable for any debts contracted by a wife in a business which he has assigned to her to manage (*h*). And on the same principle it has been stated "that persons carrying on a family business, in the profits of which all the members of the family would participate, must have authority to pledge the joint family property and credit for the ordinary purposes of the business. And therefore that debts honestly incurred in carrying on such business must over-ride the rights of all members of the joint family in property acquired with funds derived from the joint business" (*i*). But debts contracted by any individual member of a joint family, for his own personal benefit, will not bind the family property (*k*). It is said, however, that a subsequent promise by one member of a family to pay the individual debt of another member, previously contracted, would bind him (*l*). But such a promise would now be held invalid for want of consideration (*m*).

(*f*) Nārada, iii. § 12, 13; Vishnu, 1 Dig. 295; Manu, viii. § 167; Yājñavalkya, 1 Dig. 313; Kātyāyana, 1 Dig. 296, 319; 1 W. MacN. 286.

(*g*) Nārada, iii. § 19.

(*h*) Yājñavalkya, Vrihaspati, 1 Dig. 317, 318; 2 W. MacN. 278, 281.

(*i*) *Per Pontifex*, J., 1 Calc. 275.

(*k*) *Veerappen v. Brunton*, Mad. Dec. 1850, 124; *Soobramaneya v. Parooneliappa*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 129; *Venkatasawmy v. Kuppaiyan*, 1 Mad. L. R. 354.

(*l*) Nārada, iii. § 17; Vrihaspati, Kātyāyana, 1 Dig. 316, 317.

(*m*) Indian Contract Act (IX of 1872), s. 25.

CHAPTER X.

ALIENATIONS.

§ 290. THE law of alienation falls naturally into two branches, according as the property in question is joint or several. Further distinctions arise under each head with respect to the nature of the property, as being movable or immovable. Again under the first branch, the person who makes the alienation may do so, in his capacity of father of the family, or manager of the corporation, or merely as a private member of the corporation. Again the act in dispute may purport to dispose of more than the alienor's share in the entire property, or of a portion equal to or less than his share. Finally, in each particular instance the validity of the transaction will vary, according as it is decided by the law of the Mitāksharâ or of the Dâya Bhâga. I shall first examine the position of the father of the family under Mitāksharâ law.

Division of subject.

§ 291. I have already explained the process by which the father descended from being the head of the Patriarchal Family to be the manager of a Joint Family, in which the sons acquired by birth rights almost equal to his own (a). But in respect of movables he was still asserted by Vijñaneśvara to possess a larger power of disposition, even though they were ancestral. The texts upon which he founds this opinion may either be a survival from the period when the father actually possessed a higher power than belongs to him at present, or, more probably, merely indicate the authority which the manager of a family would necessarily possess over the class of articles which would come under the head of movables in early times (b). In fact Vijñaneśvara himself does not claim for the father an

Power of father over movables.

(a) See *ante*, § 204, 226.

(b) See *ante*, § 228, 229.

Power over
ancestral
movables.

absolute power of disposing of movables at his own pleasure, but only an "independent power in the disposal of them for indispensable acts of duty, and for purposes prescribed by texts of law, as gifts through affection, support of the family, relief from distress and so forth," and this is the view taken by Sir Thomas Strange and Dr. Mayr (c). Mr. Colebrooke and Mr. MacNaghten, however, appear to lay it down, that in regard to ancestral movables the power of the father is only limited by his own discretion, and by a sense of spiritual responsibility (d). The point has arisen incidentally in several cases, but except in one instance has never received a full discussion. In a case in the High Court of Bengal, it was said, "By the Mitāksharâ law the son has a vested right of inheritance in the ancestral immovable property; on the other hand, the father has it in his power to dispose as he likes of all acquired and all personal property" (e). This latter remark, however, was merely *obiter dictum*. In Madras a son sued his father for a partition of property, partly house property and partly jewels. As regards the latter, Bittleston, J., quoted the texts of the Mitāksharâ (I. i. § 21, 24) as showing that "it does not follow that the plaintiff has any right to complain of his father having made an unjust and partial distribution of them" (f). What the father was said by the plaintiff himself to have done was, that he gave the bulk of the jewels to the daughters of the family, only giving one to the wife of his son. Possibly this was only the sort of family arrangement which the Mayūkha intimates as being within the powers of the head of the family (g). In any case the remark was extra-judicial, as the learned Judge went on to decide that none of the property sued for was ancestral. In a later Madras case, a son had sued for a declaration of his right to succeed to the whole of the

(c) Mitāksharâ, i. 1 § 27; 1 Stra. H. L. 20, 261; Mayr, p. 40.

(d) 2 Stra. H. L. 9, 436, 441; 1 W. MacN. 3. The latter passage was cited with approval by the P. C., in 6 M. I. A. 77, but this point was not then before them. M. Gibelin states the law with the same generality. 1 Gib. 126; 2 Gib. 14; and Dr. Wilson, Works, v. 69.

(e) *Sudanund v. Bonomallee*, Marsh. 320.

(f) *Nallatumbi v. Mukunda*, 3 Mad. H. C. 455.

(g) V. May., iv. 1, § 5; ante, 228.

ancestral property, movable and immovable, in his father's possession, and for an injunction against waste. The original and appellate Courts decreed in his favour as regards the immovable, but not as regards the movable property, "on the ground that the defendant had the absolute right to dispose of such portion." The High Court dismissed the suit, considering that the plaintiff was claiming a right to the whole property, which he did not possess. They did not notice the distinction taken below between movables and immovables, simply observing, "As only son he has a present proprietary interest in one undivided moiety of the property, and nothing more. Consequently, the suit for the establishment of an existing reversionary right in him as heir to the whole property on the death of the defendant, and the decrees declaring such rights, are groundless" (h). In the N. W. Provinces the point has been spoken of as being "the subject of much discussion." The question then before the Court was whether ancestral movables were chargeable with maintenance. This it was held that they were, since whatever might be the father's power of disposal, they were not the subject of such separate ownership by him as to be free from the ordinary charges affecting Hindu inheritance (i). In one case in the Privy Council, where the extent of a father's power of disposal *inter vivos* became material, as determining his testamentary power, the Judicial Committee said that in cases under the Mitāksharā law, "a Hindu without male descendants may dispose by will of his separate and self-acquired property, whether movable or immovable; and that one having male descendants may so dispose of self-acquired property, if movable, subject perhaps to the restriction that he cannot wholly disinherit any one of such descendants" (k). Here it is not suggested that he had any such power over movables, when not self-acquired but ancestral. A case of exactly that nature was recently before the Privy Council on appeal from Madras. There it was attempted to set aside a will by

Power over
ancestral
movables.

(h) *Rayacharlu v. Venkataramaniah*, 4 Mad. H. C. 60.

(i) *Shib Dayee v. Doorga Pershad*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 70.

(k) *Beer Pertab v. Rajender Pertab*, 12 M. I. A. 38.

Power over
ancestral
movables.

which the testator left only about one-eleventh of his whole property to his only son, bequeathing the rest to his divided brother. The property was all movable (*l*). The lower Court found that the property was self-acquired, and *therefore* held the will valid. On appeal the entire argument before the Judicial Committee was directed to overthrow or support this finding. It was never contended on behalf of the respondent in any of the Courts that the father would have had an absolute power of disposition over the property, as being movable, even if it was ancestral—though such an argument, if well founded, would have been a complete answer to the contention of the appellant (*m*). Of course this is only a negative inference. But considering the experience of the counsel who appeared for the respondent, it seems deserving of much weight. The point was raised in a somewhat similar case in Bombay, and decided. There a Hindu under the Mitāksharâ law died possessed of a large amount of ancestral movable property, and with two undivided sons. By his will he bequeathed to one of his sons nearly the whole of the property. The Court, after reviewing the provisions of the Mitāksharâ and Mayûkha, and the *dicta* in Marshall and 12 Moore I. A. already quoted, set aside the will. They held that it could not be valid either as a gift or a partition. They said, “It would be impossible to hold a gift of the great bulk of the family property to one son, to the exclusion of the other, to be a gift prescribed by texts of law; for the texts which we next quote distinctly prohibit such an unequal distribution” (*n*). That is to say, the Court adopted the opinion of Sir Thomas Strange, that the father has a special power of dealing with ancestral movable property, but only for certain very special purposes, specified by the Mitāksharâ. Whenever the case arises again, the contention probably will be to bring the alienation within those purposes.

(*l*) It is not so stated in the report, probably because no argument was directed to the point, but the fact was so. It was all in Government paper, except two or three houses of trifling value.—J. D. M.

(*m*) *Pauliem Valloo v. P. Sooryah*, 4 I. A. 109.

(*n*) *Laksman Dada Naik v. Ramchandra*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561, practically overruling the previous decision in *Ramchandra Dada Naik v. Mahader*, 1 Bomb. H. C. Appx. 76 (2nd ed.)

§ 292. Except in this instance, and in regard to the liability for his debts (§ 280), there is under Mitāksharā law no distinction between a father and his sons. They are simply coparceners (o). So long as he is capable, the father is the head and manager of the family. He is entitled to the possession of the joint property. He directs the concerns of the family within itself, and represents it to the world (p). But as regards substantial proprietorship, he has no greater interest in the joint property than any of his sons. If the property is ancestral, each by birth acquires an interest equal to his own. If it is acquired by joint labour or joint funds, then, from the very nature of the case, all stand on the same footing. And in the same manner his grandsons and great-grandsons severally take an interest on their respective births in the rights of their fathers who represent them, and therefore in unascertained shares of the entire property (§ 244). It is therefore an established rule that a father can make no disposition of the joint property which will prejudice his issue, unless he obtains their assent, if they are able to give it, or unless there is some established necessity or moral or religious obligation to justify the transaction. And it makes not the least difference whether the disposition is in favour of a stranger or one of the family themselves. The test is, whether it is an infringement upon their vested rights (q). For instance, where the father had given a lease of land to the family dewan as a reward for faithful services, during the minority, and therefore without the consent of his sons, the lease was set aside (r). On the same principle, it has been held that one of several coparceners has a right to forbid the common property being dealt with in any way that alters its character; as, for instance, by building upon it (s); or that places any part of it in the exclusive posses-

Authority of
father

restricted by
rights of issue.

(o) See *per curiam*, 2 Mad. H. C. 417; 4 Mad. H. C. 61; 6 W. R. 256; 7 N. W. P. H. C. 279.

(p) *Buldeo Das v. Sham Lal*, 1 All. 77.

(q) *Sham Singh v. Mt. Umraotee*, 2 S. D. 75 (92); *Motee Lall v. Mitterjeet*, 6 S. D. 71 (82); *Raja Ram Tewarry v. Luchman Pershad*, 8 W. R. 15.

(r) *Pratabnarayan v. Ct. of Wards*, 3 B. L. R., A. C., 21; *Muttumaran v. Lakshmi*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 227.

(s) *Jankee Singh v. Bukhooree*, S. D. of 1856, 761; *Indurdeonarain v. Toolseerain*, S. D. of 1857, 765; *Gurudas v. Bijaya*, 1 B. L. R., A. C., 108; *Sheopershad v. Leela Singh*, 12 B. L. R. 183.

sion of one, so as to bar the joint rights of the others (*t*). Of course it would be otherwise if such acts were done in the ordinary course of management, as by building on building-land, or leasing out houses held as an investment.

Zemindary.

Case of impartible property.

§ 293. The same principles govern the case of an impartible Zemindary when it is joint property (§ 252), though their application is necessarily different. The Zemindar for the time being is absolute owner of the whole income of the Zemindary, its savings, and the investments acquired with such savings (§ 258). Consequently none of his coparceners, lineal or collateral, possess any interest in these which can entitle them to control him in their disposal. "Instead of several members of the family holding the property in common, one takes it in its entirety, and the common law rights of the others, who would be coparceners of partible property, are reduced to rights of survivorship to the possession of the whole, dependent upon the same contingency as the rights of survivorship of coparceners *inter se* to the undivided share of each; and to a provision for maintenance in lieu of coparcenary shares (*u*). But this right to the whole, whether it be a right of survivorship or of succession, carries with it a right to secure the undiminished descent of the whole. Acts which only affect the life interest of the Zemindar do not injure the other members, but acts which affect their reversionary interest do injure them. The result, therefore, seems to be, that the holder of an impartible Zemindary under Mitâksharâ law is in much the same position as a widow inheriting the estate of her husband. His acts or alienations are good for his life, but not beyond it. At his death they are voidable at the option of his successor, if made without consent, or without necessity (*x*). Cases of this sort naturally arise almost entirely in Madras, and there are often complicated by considerations arising out of

(*t*) *Stalkartt v. Gopal Panday*, 12 B. L. R. 197.

(*u*) *Yenumula Gauridevamma v. Ramandora*, 6 Mad. H. C. 105, *per Scotland, C. J.* See, however, as to survivorship, the remarks of the P. C., 12 M. I. A. 540, § 461.

(*x*) *Venkata Neeladry v. Enooguntty*, 1 Mad. Dec. 284, 3 Kn. 27; *Ramachendra v. Jaganada*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 162; *Malavaroya v. Oppayi*, 1 Mad. H. C. 349.

Madras Reg. XXV of 1802, s. 8 (y). It authorizes Zemindars to transfer their proprietary right in their Zemindaries, in whole or in part, without the previous consent of Government, and declares such transfers to be valid, provided they shall not be repugnant to the Hindu laws; but it renders necessary certain steps in the way of registration, and apportionment of the assessment; in default of which "such sale, gift, or transfer shall be of no legal force or effect." The result of a neglect of these provisions has been matter of much, and conflicting, discussion (z). But it is quite clear that a compliance with those provisions does not enable the Zemindar to do anything which the Hindu law does not authorize. The Regulation waives all opposition on the part of Government but does not affect the rights of heirs (a). As Holloway, J., said in one case, "The *ratio decidendi* of all the cases down to the two latest (in 1 Mad. H. C., pp. 148, 455) clearly is, that the Zemindar has an estate analogous to an estate tail, as it originally stood upon the statute *De Donis*. He is the owner, but can neither encumber nor alienate beyond the period of his own life. If he had sold, the sale would be inoperative beyond his own life, and would amount merely to an alienation of his life interest" (b).

Zemindaries in Madras.

§ 294. On the same principle, not only actual alienations of part of a Zemindary, but any transactions which have the effect of diminishing its value in the hands of the heir, have been held invalid against him. For instance, it has been decided that a Zemindar "could no more charge a perpetual annuity upon the income of the Zemindary than alienate the *corpus*" (c). Similarly, leases of Zemindary land, either at no rent, or at a favourable rent, when not made *bonâ fide* as a premium on the cultivation of waste (d), have been held not binding on the successors, though in

Charges and leases.

(y) See *Subbarayulu v. Rama Reddi*, 1 Mad. H. C. 141; *Pitchakutti v. Ponnamma*, ib. 148; *per curiam*, 2 Mad. H. C. 139, 143.

(z) See *Syed Ali v. Zemindar of Salur*, 3 Mad. H. C. 5; *Venkateswara v. Alagoo Moottoo*, 8 M. I. A. 326; *Kondappa v. Annamalai*, 4 Mad. H. C. 396.

(a) See too Reg. IV of 1822.

(b) *Chintalapati v. Zemindar of Vizianagram*, 2 Mad. H. C. 128; *Pareyasami v. Salugai Tevar*, 8 Mad. H. C. 157.

(c) *Narayana v. Harischendana*, 1 Mad. H. C. 455.

(d) See Mad. Reg. XXX of 1802, ss. 2, 9, 12, 15; Mad. Act VIII of 1865, ss. 3, 4, 11.

Zemindaries in
Madras.

terms they were perpetual and irrevocable (e). And the same ruling has been applied by the Bengal High Court in regard to leases and alienations of estates governed by the Mitâksharâ law (f). There are, however, two cases in the Privy Council which would seem to indicate that the above doctrine is not universally true. In the first the Judicial Committee drew a distinction between *Amarum* or *Kattubady* grants which were resumable at the will of the Zemindar, and *Altamghâ Inams*, which were binding in perpetuity. They held the particular instance to come under the former head, so that there was in fact no decision that the latter species of grants would in every case be binding on the successor (g). In the second case the Committee decided that a perpetual lease at a low rent, granted in consideration of military services, bound the successor of the Zemindar who had granted it. There, however, the only point taken against the validity of the lease was that it had not been registered under Reg. XXV of 1802, s. 8. This section was decided not to apply. But Lord Kingsdown, at the end of his judgment, suggested the very point now under consideration. He said, "It is not very obvious upon what principle it can be held that an instrument good against the party making it is bad against an heir, if the ancestor had an absolute power of alienation. If the successor is, as we should term it, a remainderman, or claiming by a title which the ancestor could not defeat, the case, of course, is different" (h). Neither of these decisions can, I imagine, be held to decide the point. Finally, debts or obligations contracted by a Zemindar, which were neither necessary nor beneficial to the family, have been held not to bind successors other than sons (i).

Effect of a
forfeiture.

§ 295. On the other hand, the whole principle upon

(e) *Viswasu v. Vahidally*, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 51; *Gode Janakaiya v. Patri Surasani*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 58; *Gode Narayana v. Yeranki*, ib. 69; *Venkata Krishna v. Suriya*, Mad. Dec. of 1862, 19; *per curiam*, 4 Mad. H. C. 471. Some of these decisions went upon the Reg. XXV of 1802, s. 8, which has been held not to apply to leases. *Venkataswara v. Alagoo Moottoo*, 8 M. I. A. 327.

(f) *Pratabnarayan v. Ct. of Wards*, 3 B. L. R., A. C., 21; *Ram Narain Singh v. Pertum Singh*, 11 B. L. R. 397.

(g) *Unide v. Pemmasawmy*, 7 M. I. A. 128.

(h) *Venkataswara v. Alagoo Moottoo*, 8 M. I. A. 327, 338.

(i) *Pareyasawmy v. Salugai*, 8 Mad. H. C. 157; *Kosalarama v. Salugai*, ib. 189, overruled on another point in the P. C. 5 I. A. 61.

which the above series of decisions depends was attacked by Couch, C.J., in a case before the High Court of Bengal. There an impartible estate, which descended by the law of primogeniture, was held during the mutiny by a rebel. He was sentenced to death, and his estate confiscated under Act XXV of 1857. The family was governed by Mitâksharâ law. The son of the rebel claimed the estate, on the ground that by birth a joint interest in the estate vested in him, and that the confiscation could only apply to the life interest of his father. This contention was overruled. The Chief Justice said, "The question appears to be reduced to this:—Is the law of Mitâksharâ, by which each son has by birth a property in the paternal or ancestral estate (ch. i. s. 1, v. 27), consistent with the custom that the estate is impartible, and descends to the eldest son? The property by birth gives to each son a right to compel the father to divide the estate, which is inconsistent with the estate being impartible. On the father's death the whole estate goes to the eldest son, and the property by birth in the others has no effect. Property by birth in such an estate is a right which can never be enjoyed by the younger sons. It is not only not necessary to secure the estate to the eldest son, but if it had effect in respect to the younger sons, it would prevent it. This part of the Mitâksharâ law cannot be reconciled with the custom, and we think we should hold it is not applicable to this estate." "The plaintiff's case, in truth, is that only the eldest son becomes a co-owner with his father, which is not the law of the Mitâksharâ. Either all the sons must become so, or none of them do, and the right of the eldest is only to inherit on his father's death" (*k*). But, with great submission, it may be asked, whether this last dilemma is a sound one? May not the principle be that which was stated by Scotland, C. J. (*l*), viz., that the

Right of son to impartible property denied.

(*k*) *Thakoor Kapilnauth v. The Government*, 13 B. L. R. 445, 458, 460. The Court in fact found that the suit was barred by limitation. Possibly too the case might have been decided in the same way upon a different principle, viz., that even a tenant for life, such as a widow, completely represents the estate for certain purposes, and may by his conduct defeat the interests of reversioners. See *post*, § 559.

(*l*) 6 Mad. H. C. 105; *ante* § 293.

law of the Mitāksharâ which governs joint property applies to impartible estates, except so far as their mode of succession and enjoyment render it inapplicable. The rule that sons take an interest by birth cannot, *ex hypothesi*, apply so as to enable them to hold the estate jointly, or to divide it. But it may very well apply to the extent of precluding the father from leaving them nothing to enjoy.

Right to object.

§ 296. Dispositions of property by a father can of course only be objected to by those who have a joint interest with him in the property, either by joint acquisition, or by birth. Where the objection is based on the latter ground, it is necessary to show that such an interest vested in the objector at his birth, or by his birth. Therefore a son cannot object to alienations validly made by his father before he was born or begotten, because he could only by birth obtain an interest in property which was then existing in his ancestor. Hence, if at the time of the alienation there had been no one in existence whose assent was necessary, or if those who were then in existence had consented, he could not afterwards object on the ground that there was no necessity for the transaction (*m*). On the other hand, if the alienation was made by a father without necessity, and without the consent of sons then living, it would not only be invalid against them, but also against any son born before they had ratified the transaction; and no consent given by them after his birth would render it binding upon him (*n*). In one case the pandits advised the Madras Sudder Court that the rule as to the rights of sons extended so far, that a man “had not the power to dispose of all his property so long as he was able to beget children, but that he might alienate a small portion of the same, if by so doing he did not deprive his issue then born, or that might be born to him, of the means of support” (*o*). This futwah evidently rested on a text of *Vyâsa* cited in the Mitāksharâ (I i. § 27): “They who are born, and they who are yet unbegotten, and they who are still in the womb, require the means of support. No gift or sale

Interest by birth.

(*m*) *Jado Sing v. Mt. Rance*, 5 N. W. P. H. C. 113; *Raja Ram Tewarry v. Luchmun Pershad*, 8 W. R. 16, 21; *Girdharee Lall v. Kantoo Lall*, 1 I. A. 321.

(*n*) *Hurodoot v. Beer Narain*, 11 W. R. 480.

(*o*) *Soobbaputten v. Jungameeah*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 3.

should therefore be made." But this text, so far as it applies to sons yet unbegotten, was treated by the Madras High Court as merely a moral precept, and they held that the rights of an unborn son only extended to the case of one who was in the womb at the time of the transaction complained of (*p*).

§ 297. An adopted son stands in exactly the same position as a natural-born son, and has the same right to object to his father's alienations. In two cases pandits have relied on the above text of Vyâsa, as enabling a son who had been adopted under an authority from the father to set aside alienations made by the father himself, before the adoption but after the authority; the ground being, that the possession of an authority to adopt by the widow was equivalent to a pregnancy (*q*). But this principle must now be taken as being overruled (*r*), and there can be no doubt that the interests of an adopted son arise for the first time on his adoption, and that he cannot after his adoption set aside any transaction which was valid when it took place, at all events as against his adopting father (*s*).

Adopted son.

Alienations
after authority.

§ 298. A father who is separated from his sons can, of course, dispose at pleasure, not only of his share, but of all property acquired after partition; since as to the former the sons have relinquished the rights they obtained by birth, and as to the latter they never had any such rights (*t*). *Primâ facie* one would imagine the same rule must apply as to self-acquisition, and on the same grounds. Self-acquisition *ex vi termini* does not belong to the co-heirs (*u*), and in one passage *Vijñanesvara* expressly states that "the son must acquiesce in the father's disposal of his own self-acquired property" (*x*). In an earlier passage, however, he states that the father "is subject to the control of his sons

Separate pro-
perty.

Self-acquisi-
tions.

(*p*) *Yekeyamian v. Agniswarian*, 4 Mad. H. C. 307. See *Parichat v. Zalim Singh*, 4 I. A. 159, where the P. C. declined to pronounce upon the point.

(*q*) *Ram Kishen v. Mt. Stri Muttee*, 3 S. D. 367 (489, 495); *Nagalutchmee v. Gopoo Nadaraja*, 6 M. I. A. 320, and *per curiam*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, 117.

(*r*) See *ante*, § 178, 179.

(*s*) *Sudanund v. Soorjomonee*, 11 W. R. 436.

(*t*) *Nârada*, xiii. § 43; *Vivâda Chintâmañi*, 314; *Mitâksharâ*, i. 1, § 30; *Juvav v. Jaki*, Mad. Dec. of 1862, 1. See as to the early law, *ante*, § 209.

(*u*) *Mitâksharâ*, i. 4, § 1, 2.

(*x*) *Mitâksharâ*, i. 5. § 10.

Self-acquired
immovable pro-
perty.

and the rest, in regard to the immovable estate, whether acquired by himself, or inherited from his father or other predecessor," citing as an authority the text of Vyâsa above quoted (y). Hence a conflict of decisions has arisen as to whether self-acquired immovables are absolutely at the father's disposal or not. In Madras it has been held that they are not, and in this opinion Mr. Colebrooke and Sir Thomas Strange concur (z). There is also a decision of the High Court of the North-west Provinces to the same effect (a), and the Judicial Committee, when stating the power of disposition possessed by a Hindu under Mitâksharâ law, say that "if without descendants he may dispose by will of his separate and self-acquired property, whether movable or immovable; and that one having male descendants may so dispose of self-acquired property, if movable, subject perhaps to the restriction that he cannot wholly disinherit anyone of such relations" (b). On the other hand, Mr. W. MacNaghten says, in speaking of a father's powers, "with respect to real property acquired or recovered by the occupant, he is at liberty to make any alienation or distribution which he may think fit, subject only to spiritual responsibility" (c). And this was expressly determined to be the law by the High Court of Bengal on a full examination of all the native texts. They said that "the apparent conflict between the passages of the Mitâksharâ is reconciled, if the right of the sons in the self-acquired property of the father is treated as an imperfect right incapable of being enforced" (d). The Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, which is the ruling authority in the Mithilâ, but which is really little more than a compendium of the Mitâksharâ, states without any exception that a father may dispose of his self-acquired property at his pleasure, and this has been affirmed to be the law of

(y) Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 27. See the earlier law discussed *ante*, § 230, 231.

(z) 1 Stra. H. L. 261; 2 Stra. H. L. 436—441, 450; *Muttumaran v. Lakshmi*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 227; *Komala v. Gungadhera*, Mad. Dec. of 1862, 41. See *Menatchi v. Chetumbara*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 61; *per curiam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 55.

(a) *Madhasookh v. Budree*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 153.

(b) 12 M. I. A. 38.

(c) 1 W. MacN. 2, cited with approval in the P. C., but as to a different point, 6 M. I. A. 77. See too 4 M. I. A. 1, 103.

(d) *Muddun Gopal v. Ram Buksh*, 6 W. R. 71; *Ojoodhya v. Ram Surun*, ib. 77; *Rojaram v. Luchmun Pershad*, 8 W. R. 15; *Sudanund v. Soorjo Monee*, 11 W. R. 436.

that district by the Privy Council (*e*). The same rule has been laid down by the High Courts of Bombay and the N. W. Provinces (*f*), and M. Gibelin states that the understanding in Pondicherry is to the same effect (*g*). It may probably be laid down with little hesitation that the same decision will be arrived at in Madras, whenever the law comes to be reviewed. And similarly a man is at perfect liberty to dispose of property which he has inherited collaterally, or in such a mode that his descendants do not by birth acquire an interest in it (*h*). And whatever be the nature of the property, or the mode in which it has been acquired, a man without issue may dispose of it at his pleasure, as against his wife or daughters, or his remote descendants, or his collateral relations (*i*). Of course as regards collaterals it is assumed that it has not been acquired by him in such a way as to make them coparceners with him in respect of it (*k*).

Persons who have no interest by birth.

§ 299. Any want of capacity on the part of the father to alienate the family property, may be supplied by the consent of the coparceners. Such consent may either be express, or implied from their conduct at or after the time of the transaction (*l*). And of course ratification will supply the want of an original consent; such a ratification will be inferred where a son, with full knowledge of all the facts, takes possession of, and retains that which has been purchased with the proceeds of the property disposed of (*m*). Whether the consent of all the coparceners is necessary will depend upon the question, which will be discussed hereafter, as to the power of one of several to dispose of his share

Consent.

(*e*) Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 76, 229, but see p. 309; *Bishen Perakash v. Bawa Misser*, 12 B. L. R. 430, affirming 10 W. R. 287, from which it appears that the property in dispute was immoveable. See too *Nana Nurain v. Huree Punth*, 9 M. I. A. 96, 121.

(*f*) *Gangabai v. Vamanji*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 318; *Sital v. Madho*, 1 All. 394.

(*g*) 1 Gib. 14, and see *per Scotland*, C. J., 6 Mad. H. C. 379.

(*h*) See ante, § 248.

(*i*) *Mulraz Lachmia v. Chalekani*, 2 M. I. A. 54; *Nagalutchmee v. Gopon Nadaraja*, 6 M. I. A. 309; *Narottam v. Narsandas*, 3 Bomb. A. C. 6; *Ajoodhia v. Kashee Gir*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 31. These were all cases of wills, which of course are less favoured than alienations *inter vivos*.

(*k*) *Tayamana v. Perumal*, 1 Mad. H. C. 51.

(*l*) *Arunuga v. Ramasawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 258; *Vittal Payi v. Ananta*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 37; *Virasawmy v. Varada*, ib. 146.

(*m*) *Gangabai v. Vamanji*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 318; *per curiam*, *Modhoo Dyal v. Kolbur Singh*, B. L. R. Sup. Vol. 1020.

(§ 307). If it is the law that he can do so, then of course the consent of some would bind their shares, though not the shares of the dissenting members. If the contrary is the law, then the consent of all would be required to give any validity to the transaction. Where a grandfather alienates with the consent of his son, that consent binds an after-born grandson. But where the grandson is already in existence, and has taken a vested interest, his father's consent would not of itself bind him (*n*).

Necessity.

§ 300. Circumstances of necessity will also justify a father, as head of the family, in disposing of any part of the family property. In the *Mitāksharā* the explanation which follows the text of *Vyāsa*—"Even a single individual may conclude a donation, mortgage, or sale of immovable property, during a season of distress, for the sake of the family, and especially for pious purposes"—seems to limit this authority to cases where the other coparceners are minors and incapable of giving their consent (*o*). And it has been held in one case in Bengal that the consent of those who are of age cannot be dispensed with, even where the transaction is for the benefit of the family (*p*). The contrary, however, was held in other cases, and seems to have been Mr. Colebrooke's opinion (*q*). The whole current of authorities appears to support the view that the manager of the family property has an implied authority to do whatever is best for all concerned, and that no individual can defeat this power merely by withholding his consent. The powers of the manager of a Hindu estate were very fully considered by the Privy Council in a case which is always referred to as settling the law on the subject (*r*). That was the case of a mother managing as guardian for an infant heir. Of course a father, and head of the family, might have greater powers,

(*n*) *Buraik Chuttur v. Greedharee*, 9 W. R. 337, where the second proposition seems to follow from the statement that the grandson, if alive at the alienation, would have had a cause of action, notwithstanding his father's consent.

(*o*) *Mitāksharā*, i. 1; § 28, 29.

(*p*) *Muthoora v. Bootun Singh*, 13 W. R. 30, acc. 1 Stra. H. L. 20.

(*q*) *Juggernath v. Doobo Misser*, 14 W. R. 80; 2 Stra. H. L. 340, 348; *Bishambur v. Sudasheeb*, 1 W. R. 96.

(*r*) *Hunooman Pershad v. Mt. Baboojee*, 6 M. I. A. 393. The same rules apply to the case of one who is *de facto* though not *de jure* manager, *ibid.* 413.

but could not have less, and it has been repeatedly held that the principles laid down in that judgment apply equally to fathers, or other joint owners, when managing property governed by the Mitāksharā law (s). Their Lordships said (p. 423): "The power of the manager for an infant heir to charge an estate not his own, is, under the Hindu law, a limited and qualified power. It can only be exercised rightly in case of need, or for the benefit of the estate. But where, in the particular instance, the charge is one that a prudent owner would make, in order to benefit the estate, the *bonâ fide* lender is not affected by the precedent mismanagement of the estate. The actual pressure on the estate, the danger to be averted, or the benefit to be conferred upon it, in the particular instance, is the thing to be regarded (t). But, of course, if that danger arises, or has arisen, from any misconduct to which the lender is or has been a party, he cannot take advantage of his own wrong, to support a charge in his own favour against the heir, grounded on a necessity which his wrong has helped to cause, therefore the lender in this case, unless he is shown to have acted *malâ fide*, will not be affected, though it be shewn that, with better management, the estate might have been kept free from debt. Their Lordships think that the lender is bound to enquire into the necessities for the loan, and to satisfy himself as well as he can, with reference to the parties with whom he is dealing, that the manager is acting in the particular instance for the benefit of the estate (u). But they think that if he does so enquire, and acts honestly, the real existence of an alleged sufficient and reasonably credited necessity is not a condition precedent to the validity of his charge (x), and they do not think that under such circumstance he is bound to see to the applica-

Hunooman
Pershad's case.

(s) *Deotaree v. Damoodhur*, S. D. of 1859, 1643; *Tandavaraya v. Valli*, 1 Mad. H. C. 398; *Soorendro v. Nundun Misser*, 21 W. R. 196. As to alienations by manager for idol, see *post*, § 363; by female heirs, *post*, § 542. The manager for a lunatic has the same power. *Goureenath v. Collector of Monghyr*, 7 W. R. 5.

(t) See *Deotaree v. Damoodhur*, *ubi sup.*

(u) See *Mt. Nowrutton v. Baboo Gouree*, 6 W. R. 193. He is not bound to inquire into the causes which produced the necessity. *Mohabeer v. Joobha Singh*, 16 W. R. 221; *Sheoraj v. Nukchedee*, 14 W. R. 72.

(x) See *Soorendro v. Nundun Misser*, 21 W. R. 196.

tion of the money (y). It is obvious that money to be secured on any estate is likely to be obtained upon easier terms than a loan which rests on mere personal security, and that, therefore, the mere creation of a charge securing a proper debt, cannot be viewed as improvident management; the purposes for which a loan is wanted are often future, as respects the actual application, and a lender can rarely have, unless he enters on the management, the means of controlling and directing the actual application. Their Lordships do not think that a *bonâ fide* creditor should suffer when he has acted honestly and with due caution, but is himself deceived."

Necessity justifying sale.

§ 301. The case before the Privy Council was one of mortgage and not of sale. But it is evident that the same principles would apply in either case. A prudent manager should of course, where it is possible, pay off a debt from savings rather than by a sale of part of the estate (z), and it might be more prudent to raise money by mortgage than by sale. On the other hand, where the mortgage was at high interest it might be more prudent to sell than to renew (a). In every case the question is one of fact, whether the transaction was one which a prudent owner, acting for his own benefit, would enter into. A sale of part of the property in order to raise money to pay off debts which bound the family, or to discharge the claims of government upon the land, or to maintain the family, or to perform the necessary funeral or marriage or family ceremonies, would be proper if it was prudent or necessary (b). And where there are binding debts, which cannot otherwise be met, a sale will be justifiable to pay them off, even though there was no actual pressure at the time in the shape of suits by the creditors (c). For the manager is not bound, and indeed ought not, to put the estate to the expense of actions.

(y) See *Sundarayan v. Sitaramayan*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 1, where the head of the family misappropriated the money which he had raised.

(z) *Mt. Bukshun v. Mt. Doolhin*, 12 W. R. 337.

(a) *Muthoora v. Bootun Singh*, 13 W. R. 30.

(b) *Bishambhur v. Sudasheeb*, 1 W. R. 96; *Sacaram v. Irumabai*, Perry, O. C. 129; *Saravana v. Muttayi*, 6 Mad. H. C. 371; *Babaji v. Krishnaji*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 666. See *Kullar Singh v. Modho Dhyal*, 5 Wym. 28, where it is said the transaction must be necessary, and not merely advantageous.

(c) *Kaihar v. Roop Singh*, 3 N. W. P. H. C. 4.

A fortiori of course such dealings will be justified where there are decrees in existence, whether, *ex parte* or otherwise, which could at any moment be enforced against the property (*d*). And the same circumstances which would justify the sale of part, might justify the sale of the whole property, though of course a very strong case would have to be made out.

§ 302. It must be owned that the principle of the Mitāksharā that sons have a right to control their father in the alienation of the family property, is almost nullified by the other principle that they are bound after his death to pay his debts, even though contracted without necessity; and by the logical extension of that principle, recently laid down by the Privy Council, that the father is entitled to sell the family property in order to pay off his own debts, which were not contracted for the benefit of the family, but which the sons would be under a moral obligation to discharge (*e*). Hence the High Court of Bengal, in a case similar to that decided by the Privy Council, observed: "It would therefore seem to follow that any disposition of the property, which is reasonably made by the father for the purpose of discharging a debt of this nature, that is, a debt of the father which does not fall within the exception (as being immoral), is one of those spoken of and authorised as unavoidable, by *Mit.* I. i. § 28, 29; the debt being of such a nature that the property is ultimately liable to discharge it, the alienation of that property, whether by mortgage or sale by the father, upon reasonable terms for the purpose of discharging the debt, must be substantially an unavoidable transaction" (*f*). It seems to me that the transaction rather comes under the head of those which are authorised as being for pious purposes; both father and sons being under a religious obligation to pay the debt. But of course, now that the liability is established, the principle to which it is to be referred is a matter only of speculative interest (*g*).

Ancestral debts.

✓
Right of father to sell to satisfy his own debts.

(*d*) *Purmessur v. Mt. Goolbee*, 11 W. R. 446; *Sheoraj v. Nukchedee*, 14 W. R. 72.

(*e*) *Girdharee Lall v. Kantoo Lall*, 1 I. A. 321; *ante*, § 280.

(*f*) *Muddun Gopal v. Mt. Gowrunbutty*, 15 B. L. R. 264, 271.

(*g*) See however the recent case of *Bheknarain v. Januk Singh*, 2 Calc. 438,

Pious gifts.

Another ground upon which alienations are valid, though made without necessity, is in the case of pious gifts. These no doubt were looked upon by the Brâhmans as being of general benefit to the family from the store of religious merit which they procured. The subject will be treated fully in the chapter on religious endowments (§ 359).

Burthen of proof of necessity.

§ 303. Those who deal with a person who has only a limited interest in property, and who professes to dispose of a larger interest, are *primâ facie* bound to make out the facts which authorise such a disposition. But the nature and extent of the proof which they must offer will vary according to the facts of the case. In *Hunooman Pershad's* case, it was contended that the burthen was discharged by showing an advance to the manager, and the *factum* of a deed by him, and in support of this a *dictum* of the Agra Sudder Court was quoted. Upon this the Judicial Committee remarked, "It might be a very correct course to adopt with reference to suits of that particular character, which was one where the sons of a living father were, with his suspected collusion, attempting in a suit against a creditor, to get rid of the charge on an ancestral estate created by the father, on the ground of the alleged misconduct of the father in extravagant waste of the estate. Now it is to be observed, that a lender of money may reasonably be expected to prove the circumstances connected with his own particular loan, but cannot reasonably be expected to know or come prepared with proof of the antecedent economy and good conduct of the owner of an ancestral estate, whilst the antecedents of their father's career would be more likely to be in the knowledge of the sons, members of the same family, than of a stranger; consequently this *dictum* may perhaps be supported on the general principle that the allegation and proof of facts, presumably in his better knowledge, is to be looked for from the party who possesses that better knowledge, as well as on the obvious ground in such suits of the danger of collusion between father and

Proof of necessity varies.

where the High Court of Bengal denied that the two last cases established the right of a father under Mitâksharâ law to mortgage ancestral property for debts not contracted for the benefit of the family; and the later case of *Adurmoni v. Chowdry Sib*, 3 Cal. 1, where the doctrine in the text was laid down.

sons in fraud of the creditor of the former. Their Lordships think that the question on whom does the *onus* of proof lie in such suits as the present, is one not capable of a general and inflexible answer. The presumption proper to be made will vary with circumstances, and must be regulated by and dependent on them. Thus, where the mortgagee himself with whom the transaction took place, is setting up a charge in his favour made by one whose title to alienate he necessarily knew to be limited and qualified, he may be reasonably expected to allege and prove facts presumably better known to him than to the infant heir, namely those facts which embody the representations made to him of the alleged needs of the estate, and the motives influencing his immediate loan. It is to be observed that the representations by the manager accompanying the loan as part of the *res gestæ*, and as the contemporaneous declarations of an agent, though not actually selected by the principal, have been held to be evidence against the heir; and as their Lordships are informed that such *primâ facie* proof has been generally required in the Supreme Court of Calcutta, between the lender and the heir, where the lender is enforcing his security against the heir, they think it reasonable and right that it should be required. It is obvious, however, that it might be unreasonable to require such proof from one not an original party, after a lapse of time and enjoyment, and apparent acquiescence; consequently, if, as is the case here as to part of the charge, it be created by substitution of a new security for an older one, where the consideration for the older one was an old precedent debt of an ancestor not previously questioned, a presumption of the kind contended for by the appellant would be reasonable" (h).

Burthen of proof

§ 304. One point as to which there seems at first to be a conflict of decisions, is as to the amount of proof incumbent upon a purchaser under a decree, or upon one who lends

in case of decrees.

(h) *Hunooman Pershad v. Mt. Baboojee*, 6 M. I. A. pp. 418—420; *Tandavaroja v. Valli*, 1 Mad. H. C. 398; *Vadali v. Manda Appaya*, 2 Mad. H. C. 407; *Saravana v. Muttayi*, 6 Mad. H. C. 371; *Lalla Bunseedhur v. Koonwur Bindeserree*, 10 M. I. A. 454; *Syud Tasooar v. Koonj Beharee*, 3 N. W. P. H. C. 8; *Chowdhry v. Brojo Soondur*, 18 W. R. 77.

money to the manager of an estate to pay off a decree, or who purchases a part of an estate from the manager to supply him with funds for that purpose. Is the production of a *bonâ fide* decree sufficient of itself to establish a case of necessity, or is it incumbent upon the purchaser or creditor to go further, and show that the decree was passed for a purpose which would bind the estate? The result of the decisions appears to be, that the party who relies on the decree is entitled to assume that it was properly passed, and that everything done under it was properly done. But the extent to which this will benefit him depends upon the nature of the decree, and the person against whom it was given. Where the decree is against a father it conclusively establishes that there was a debt due by him, and as against his issue nothing more is necessary. It is not, as we have seen, necessary to show that the debt was for the benefit of the family. Where property is sold under such a decree, "the purchaser is not bound to go back beyond the decree to ascertain whether the Court was right in giving the decree, or having given it, in putting up the property for sale under an execution upon it" (i). And of course the same rule would apply where a minor sought to set aside a sale made by his guardian in order to pay off a decree against the minor himself (k); or where the transaction was disputed by an heir, not being a coparcener, for he is bound to pay the debts of the person whose estate he takes (§ 282). But it would be otherwise where the decree was given against a simple coparcener. It would be a perfectly valid decree against him, and might during his life be enforced by execution and sale of his interest in the property (§ 284). But as his debt would not bind his coparceners or their share in the property, unless it was contracted by their consent or for their benefit (§ 289), so a decree against him can create no higher liability. It ascertains his debt, but does no more. If it is intended to procure payment of the debt, directly or indirectly, out of the shares of the other

Transactions
founded on
decrees.

(i) *Per curiam*. *Muddun Thakoor v. Kantoo Lall*, 1 I. A. 321, 334. See numerous cases following this decision, 5 N. W. P. H. C. 89; 23 W. R. 260; 24 W. R. 231, 281, 364; 25 W. R. 148, 185, 311; 2 Calc. 213.

(k) *Sheoraj v. Nukchedee*, 14 W. R. 72.

members, the person who relies upon the decree must do something more than merely produce it. "It is necessary to go further, and show that those debts themselves were such as to be properly binding upon those who have not personally incurred them. If it were otherwise, the debtor, having first borrowed money for his own purposes, and mortgaged family lands for the satisfaction of the debt, would be able, by the simple process of admitting the debt, to render the invalid unimpeachable, or by discharging with borrowed money a previous bond in itself wholly invalid against coparceners, would bind them" (l).

§ 305. It has been said that where a debt is ancestral, and property is sold to meet it, the purchaser is not bound to enquire whether the debt could have been met from other sources (m). But I imagine this can only apply where there is at all events an apparent necessity for the sale. In the case where the rule was laid down, the Court went on to say, "Nor is it indicated from what sources it would have been met." In a Bengal case, the Sudder Court laid down nearly the opposite principle. They said, "It may be shown that the ostensible object of the loan was to pay off Government revenue, but to render such a loan binding upon those who had reversionary interests upon the property, it must also be satisfactorily proved that such loan was absolutely necessary from failure of the resources of the estate itself, and was not raised through the caprice or extravagance of the proprietor" (n). Here the law seems to be laid down rather too strictly. The person who deals with the manager of a joint family property has to consider the propriety and necessity of the transaction in which he is engaged, not merely the propriety and necessity of paying the debt which is the pretext for the transaction. If the debt is improper or unnecessary, and known to be so by the lender, of course the transaction is invalid. If the payment of the debt is proper and necessary, the transaction will still

Where other funds are available.

Extravagances of manager.

(l) *Saravana v. Muttayi*, 6 Mad. H. C. 371; per *Holloway, J.*, at p. 386; *Periasawmy v. Salugai*, 8 Mad. H. C. 157; *Reotee v. Ramjeet*, 2 N. W. P. H. C. 50; *Venkatasaawmy v. Kuppaiyan*, 1 Mad. L. R. 354. *Venkataramaiyan v. Venkatasubramanya*, ib. 358.

(m) *Ajey Ram v. Girdharee*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 110.

(n) *Damoodhur v. Birjo Mohapattur*, S. D. of 1858, 802.

be invalid, unless the lender has reasonable ground for supposing that it cannot be met without his assistance. The caprice or extravagance of the proprietor is only material as showing, either that the object of the transaction was an improper one, or that the necessity for it was non-existent.

Proof of payment.

Where it is once established that there was a debt which ought to be paid, and which could not be paid without a loan or sale, if the validity of the transaction is disputed on the ground that the debt had previously been discharged or diminished, the burthen of making out this case rests upon the person who sets it up. Payment is an affirmative fact which cannot be assumed, merely on account of the antiquity of the debt (o).

Powers of manager.

§ 306. The powers of the manager of a joint family property who is not the father, are governed by exactly the same principles as those already laid down. Of course his personal debts are not binding upon his coparceners, as those of a father are upon his sons, and therefore alienations made by him to pay such debts would not bind them. In his case, too, there could be no suggestion that he had any greater power over movables than over immovables, except so far as arose from their own nature, and the mode in which they would usually be dealt with. Nor, of course, could his coparceners claim any interest in his self-acquired land.

§ 307. So far we have been considering dispositions of the family property, by which one member professed to bind the others, by selling or encumbering their shares as well as his own. We have now to examine the right of one member of a family governed by Mitâksharâ law to dispose of his own share. To an English lawyer the existence of such a right would seem obvious. Under the early Hindu law it is equally certain that no such right existed. It has become thoroughly established in Bengal, as will be seen hereafter; but in the other provinces there is a complete variance as to its existence, and the extent to which it may be exercised. The theory of the Mitâksharâ law is clearly against such a right. I have already pointed out (§ 243)

(o) *C. V. Narrainapah v. Collector of Masulipatam*, 11 M. I. A. 619, 633.

that under that law all the coparceners are joint owners of the property, but only as members of a corporation in which there are shareholders, but no shares. The family corporation remains unchanged, but its members are in a continual state of flux. No one has any share until partition, because until then it is impossible to say what the share of each may be. It will be larger one day, when a member dies; smaller the next, when a member is born (*p*). The right of the members to a partition has been slowly and reluctantly admitted. But this right carries with it the consequence of being cut off from the benefits of sharing in the family property, and participating in its future gains. If any member were allowed, from time to time, to sell his share in the joint family property, without severing himself from the family by partition, he would be securing the advantages of a division, without submitting to its inconveniences. He would be benefiting himself by the exclusive appropriation of a part of the property, which had never become his. He would be injuring the family, by diminishing their estate, and, at the same time, he would be retaining the right to profit by the future gains of their industry. No doubt the amount so disposed of might be taken into account in the event of a subsequent partition. But the rules of Hindu law contemplate the continuance of the family union, not its disruption. Until a partition took place he would have been in a position of exceptional advantage. It would be like the case of a partner who claimed the right to withdraw his capital from the concern at pleasure, without withdrawing himself. Even before partition such alienations would be subversive of the family system. That system assumes that each member of the family is supplied out of its funds in proportion to his requirements, as often as they arise, the unspent balance of each year being carried over to the capital for the benefit of all. There is no such thing as a system of individual accounting, with a ledger opened in the name of each member, and a debiting to him of his expenses, and a crediting of his proportion of the income. But if any member were

Right of coparcener to dispose of his share.

(*p*) See *per curiam*, *Sadabart Prasad v. Foolbash Koor*, 3 B. L. R., F. B. 44.

Rights of coparcener in joint property.

allowed to dispose of his share such a system would be necessary; and upon taking the annual account, it might turn out that the amount of income to which he was entitled was not sufficient to defray his expenses. The anomaly would then arise, that a member of the undivided family would either not be entitled to be maintained at all, or would be maintained as a matter of charity, and not of right. Finally the permission to alienate without a partition would necessarily have the effect of introducing strangers into the coparcenary, without the consent of its members, and defeating the right of survivorship, which they would otherwise possess.

His power of alienation.

§ 308. Of course nothing is to be found in the earlier writers upon the subject. They did not notice the point, because such an occurrence did not present itself to their minds at all. An alienation of family property, even with the consent of all, was probably a very rare event. But as property began more frequently to pass from hand to hand, the circumstances which would justify an alienation began to be defined. Vyâsa says, "A single parcener ought not, without the consent of his coparceners, to sell or give away immovable property of any sort, which the family hold in coparcenary. But at a time of distress, for the support of his household, and particularly for the performance of religious duties, even a single coparcener may give, mortgage or sell the immovable estate" (q). Not, be it observed, his own share for his own private benefit. So Nârada mentions joint property among the eight kinds of things that may not be given, though he expressly authorizes divided brothers to dispose of their shares as they like (r). And the author of the Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, while commenting on, and approving these texts, gives as his reason, "for none has any right over them according to common sense." He, adds in another passage: "What belongs to many may be given with their assent. Joint ancestral property may be given with the assent of all the

(q) 1 Dig. 455; 2 Dig. 189.

(r) Nârada, Pt. II. iv. § 4, 5; xiii. § 42—43; acc. Vṛhaspati, 2 Dig. 98; Dacsha, ib. 110.

heirs" (s). Probably all these passages referred to the powers of the father or manager. The Mitāksharā and Mayūkha in laying down the right of alienation are evidently dealing with the case of the father as representing the entire family (t). The idea of any individual acting solely on his own account does not seem to have occurred to them. The same view is laid down unhesitatingly by Mr. W. MacNaghten. He says, "A coparcener is prohibited from disposing of his own share of joint ancestral property; and such an act where the doctrine of the Mitāksharā prevails (which does not recognize any several right until after partition, or the principle of *factum valet*), would unquestionably be both illegal and invalid" (u). On the other hand Mr. Ellis, writing of the Madras Presidency, thought a sale would be valid to the extent of the alienor's own share (x). Mr. Colebrooke seems to have been in much uncertainty upon the point. The result of his various opinions appears to be, that a gift by one co-heir of his own share would be certainly invalid, and that a sale or mortgage would in strictness be also illegal; but that in the latter case "equity would require redress to be afforded to the purchaser, by enforcing partition of the whole or of a sufficient portion of it, so as to make amends to the purchaser out of the vendor's share" (y). This opinion was adopted by Sir Thomas Strange in his book, and acted on by him from the Bench (z).

Power to dispose of share.

§ 309. It is probable that the first inroad upon the strict law took place in enforcing debts by way of execution. In strict logic, of course, what a man cannot do directly by way of sale, he ought not to be allowed to do indirectly through the intervention of a decree-holder. But we have already seen that the Hindu law ascribed great sanctity to the obligation of a debt, and, in the case of a father, enabled him to defeat the rights of his sons, through the

(s) Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, pp. 72, 77.

(t) Mitāksharā, i. 1, § 27—32; V. May., iv. 1, § 3—5.

(u) 1 W. MacN. 5.

(x) 2 Stra. H. L. 350.

(y) 2 Stra. H. L. 344, 349, 433, 439.

(z) 1 Stra. H. L. 200—202; *Sashacella v. Ramasawmy*, 2 N. C. 234; *post*,

Share may be seized in execution.

medium of his creditors, though it denied him the power to do so by an express alienation (§ 274). It would be a natural transition to extend this principle to all coparceners, so far as to allow a creditor to seize the interest of any one in the joint property as a satisfaction of his separate debt. There are cases in which it has been held that even this cannot be allowed in cases under the Mitāksharâ law (a). But the contrary rule has been repeatedly laid down in all the Presidencies, and has been recently affirmed by the Privy Council. It may be taken as settled that under a decree against any individual coparcener, for his separate debt, a creditor may during the life of the debtor seize and sell his undivided interest in the family property (b). The decisions which show that this cannot be done after the death of the debtor have been already stated (§ 284). There may be greater difficulty in determining how the right of the purchaser at the sale under the decree is actually to be enforced. In Bengal, where the coparceners hold in quasi-severalty, each member has a right before partition to mark out his own share, and hold it to the exclusion of the others. Accordingly it has been held that the purchaser at a Court sale of the rights of one member is entitled to be put into physical possession even of a part of the family house; the only remedy of the other members being to purchase the rights of the debtor at the auction sale (c). But it is otherwise in cases under Mitāksharâ law, where no member has a right, without express agreement, to say that any specific portion is exclusively his. Consequently the purchaser at a Court auction cannot claim to be

Right of purchaser.

(a) *Nana Tooljaram v. Wulubdas*, Morris, 40; *Bhyro Pershad v. Basisto*, 16 W. R. 31.

(b) *Valoyooda v. Chedumbara*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 234; *Subbarayudu v. Gopavajulu*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 247; *Virasawmy v. Ayyasawmy*, 1 Mad. H. C. 471; *Vasudev v. Venkatesh*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 139; *Pandurang v. Bhasker*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 72; *Udaram v. Ramu Panduji*, ib. 76; *Gour Pershad v. Sheodeen*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 137; *Deendyal v. Jugdeep Narain*, 4 I. A. 247, (s. c., I. L. R., 3 Calc., 198), overruling 12 B. L. R. 100; *Venkataramayan v. Venkatasubramania*, 1 Mad. L. R. 358; *Suraj Bansi Koer v. Sheo Proshad Singh*, 6 I. A. 88; *Jallidar Singh v. Ramlal*, 4 Calc. 723; *Rai Narain Dass v. Nownit Lal*, 4 Calc., 809. The purchaser does not become a coparcener whose assent is required to any future dealings with the property by the remaining members; *Ballabh Das v. Sunder Das*, 1 All. 429.

(c) *Ramtonoo v. Ishurchunder*, S. D. of 1857, 1585; *Koonwur Bijoy v. Shama Soonduree*, 2 W. R. Mis. 30; *Eshan Chunder v. Nund Coomar*, 8 W. R. 239.

put into possession of any definite piece of property (d) As the Judicial Committee said in one case, "No doubt can be entertained that such a share is property, and that a decree-holder can reap it. It is specific, existing and definite; but it is not properly the subject of seizure under this particular process, but rather by process direct against the owner of it, by seizure, or sequestration or appointment of a receiver" (e). In cases which have occurred in Bombay, the High Court has held that the only mode in which the execution purchaser can enforce his rights is by a suit for a partition of the debtor's share in the whole estate, to which, of course, he must make all the members of the family parties. In carrying out the decree for partition, the Court will, as far as they can with regard to the interests of others, try to award to the purchaser any specific portion which the debtor may have originally pledged, mortgaged, or sold. The purchaser cannot sue for a partition of part of the property only, because an account of the whole estate must be taken, in order to see what interest, if any, the debtor possesses (f). On the other hand, even prior to partition, the purchaser of the interests of one coparcener is a tenant in common with the others. Therefore if he has got into possession of what was formerly enjoyed by the debtor, the other members cannot treat him as a mere trespasser. If they are willing to continue the tenancy in common, they may compel him so to enjoy his share as not to interfere with a similar enjoyment by themselves. If they object to the tenancy in common, they must sue for a partition (g).

Right of execution creditor.

§ 310. The step from holding that the share of one member can be sold under a decree, to holding that he can sell it himself, is such an easy one, that it is surprising that those who admit the former right should deny the other.

Conflict of authority as to voluntary alienation.

(d) *Kalee Pudo v. Choitan Pandah*, 22 W. R. 214; *Kallapa v. Venkatesh*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 676.

(e) 14 M. I. A. 50.

(f) *Pandurang v. Bhasker*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 72; *Udaram v. Ranu Panduji*, ib. 76; acc. *Lall Jha v. Shaik Juma*, 22 W. R. 116; *Jallidar Singh v. Ramlal*, 4 Calc. 723.

(g) *Mahabalaya v. Timaya*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 138; *Babaji v. Vasudev*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 95; *Kallapa v. Venkatesh*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 676.

Bengal.

Yet it will be found that it is denied by the High Courts of Bengal and the N. W. Provinces, while it is admitted by the High Courts of Madras and Bombay. The reason appears to be that in Bengal the right of even an execution creditor was originally not admitted. It was denied in 1871 in a decision which was not appealed against (16 W. R. 31), and was only finally established by the Privy Council in an appeal which reversed a later decision of 1873 (*h*). Consequently an unbroken current of decisions maintained a practice in conformity with the theory. In Madras and Bombay the earlier decisions negatived the right of a co-parcener to alien his share. But the right of the execution creditor was admitted, and therefore the analogous right of the co-parcener was ultimately recognized. As the question may still be treated as uncertain, it will be advisable to show rather fully what the state of the authorities really is.

Madras.

§ 311. The earliest case actually decided in Madras was one before Sir Thomas Strange in 1813. There one of two undivided brothers had mortgaged family property for his private purposes. A suit was first brought by the other brother to declare that the mortgage was not binding upon his share of the property. In this suit an account and partition was decreed. A cross suit was brought by the mortgagee against both brothers for payment and sale of the property mortgaged. The decree was that the suit should be dismissed against the second brother, that the share of the mortgagor should be held bound for payment of whatever was due upon the mortgage, but that no part of the property comprised in the bond and mortgage should be sold, until the account and partition directed under the original decree was completed. These proceedings were submitted to Mr. Colebrooke, and were approved of by him, subject to a doubt whether the charge was valid even for the share of the alienor (*i*). In a case in 1853 the Madras Sudr Court appears to have held a sale by one of several members to be valid for his share, even without a partition (*k*). On the other hand the opinion

(*h*) *Deendyal v. Jugdeep*, 4 I. A. 247.

(*i*) *Ramasawmy v. Sashacella*, 5 N. C. 234, 240.

(*k*) *Chinnapien v. Chocken*, Mad. Dec. 1853, 220.

of a pandit of the Tellicherry Court is recorded, which supports the doubt expressed by Mr. Colebrooke. In reply to a question, "Can one of an individual family, consisting of two only, dispose of half the property, leaving his coparcener's moiety undisturbed?" he answered: "It is stated in in the text of Nārada, that it is necessary that a division should be previously made, with the concurrence of all the members; wherefore the disposing to the extent of one's share at discretion is not legal" (l). This principle was followed by the Sudr Court in three cases in 1859 and 1860, when they held that a sale by an undivided member was not valid, even within the limits of his individual share, unless made under emergent circumstances (m).

Alienation of share.

§ 312. In this state of things the question came before the High Court of Madras. One of two brothers, members of an undivided family, had mortgaged one of two houses which formed part of the family property; for his own personal debt. He was then sued in an action for damages for a tort, and judgment was recovered against him. The judgment creditor took out execution, and, under a writ of *fi. fa.*, the sheriff seized and sold the debtor's interest in the mortgaged house and also in another. The purchaser sued both brothers to recover possession. Scotland, C. J., decided that both the mortgage and the execution stood on the same footing; that each was valid to the extent of the alienor's share, and that "What the purchaser or execution creditor of the coparcener is entitled to is the share to which, if a partition took place, the coparcener himself would be individually entitled, the amount of such share of course depending upon the state of the family" (n). This decision has since been treated as the ruling authority in Madras, and has been repeatedly followed (o). And the Court enjoined a father against alienating more than his share of the undivided property, but refused to interfere with alienations which appeared to

Sanctioned by High Court of Madras.

(l) 2 Stra. H. L. 451.

(m) *Ramakutty v. Kallaturian*, Mad. Dec. of 1859, 270; *Kanakasabhaiya v. Seshachala*, Mad. Dec. of 1860. 17; *Sundara v. Tegaraja*, *ibid.* 67.

(n) *Virasawmy Graminy v. Ayasawmy*, 1 Mad. H. C. 471.

(o) *Peddammuthalaty v. Timma Reddy*, 2 Mad. H. C. 270; *Palani Velappa v. Mannaru*, *ib.* 416; *Rayachartu v. Venkataramanien*, 4 Mad. H. C. 60.

Extent of power be within his share (*p*). In all these cases the transaction was enforced during the life of the alienor, and the principle was stated to be, that as the alienor could himself have obtained a partition, the Court would compel him "to give to his creditor all the remedies to which he would himself be entitled as against the object matter of his agreement" (*q*). The same ruling was applied where a partition had become impossible by death. There a father had given a portion of the property which was less than half of the whole to his wife, by a registered deed followed by possession. After his death his only son sued to set it aside. The Court refused even to listen to discussion as to the father's power to make such a gift; "because the law is quite settled that a Hindu can make a gift to the extent of his power, and in this case the deceased has done no more than that" (*r*). On the other hand, the High Court held that no coparcener could give his alienee a title to any specific portion of the joint property, even though such portion was less than his share. Each coparcener had an undivided share in every part of the property, and all that any member could sell was his interest in that part (*s*).

Devise of undivided share invalid.

§ 313. The above decisions were all passed before that given by the Full Bench in Bengal, which will be mentioned hereafter (§ 317). The same point, however, arose again after that decision. The question was, whether a devise by a father of ancestral immovable property was valid as against his only son. It was contended; first, that the father could during his life have given away his share of the family property; secondly, that his devise was valid to the same extent as his gift would have been. The Court affirmed the first proposition, but denied the second. After referring to the view taken by the High Court of Bengal that no one could assign his share until it was ascertained by a partition, the Court said, "If by the word 'share' is intended specific share, the argument is of course valid, that a coparcener cannot, before partition, convey his share to another, because

(*p*) *Kanakurty v. Venkataramdoss*, 4 Mad. Jur. 251.

(*q*) 2 Mad. H. C. 417.

(*r*) *Venkatapathy v. Iutchmee*, 6 Mad. Jur. 215.

(*s*) *Venkatuchella v. Chinnaiya*, 5 Mad. H. C. 166.

before partition it cannot be ascertained what it is. It is equally the law in Madras that a coparcener cannot, before partition, convey away, as his interest, any specific portion of the joint property. Considered in this light, the difficulties which have influenced the Calcutta High Court disappear. The person in whose favour a conveyance is made of a coparcener's interest takes what may, on a partition, be found to be the interest of the coparcener. What he so takes is, at the moment of taking, and until ascertained and severed, subject to the same fluctuations as it would be subject to, if it continued to subsist as the interest of the coparcener. But it can at the proper period be ascertained without difficulty, and there appears to be no reason, either derived from the Hindu law current in this Presidency, or founded upon general principles, for saying that such an interest is inalienable. With regard to the third question we are of opinion that the will in the case referred to cannot take effect. At the moment of death the right of survivorship is in conflict with the right by devise. Then the title by survivorship, being the prior title, takes precedence to the exclusion of that by devise (t)."

The difference between this case and that of *Venkatapathy v. Lutchmee* (u) was, that in the latter the deceased had absolutely parted with his interest before his death, whereas in the former his interest was still in existence, and therefore passed at once by survivorship.

§ 314. In Bombay the decisions have taken very much the same course as in Madras. The earlier cases appear to be opposed to the right of alienation by a coparcener, and it has been laid down that a sale or mortgage by one of two undivided brothers was invalid, even for his own share of the undivided property (x). "In subsequent cases it appears that the Bombay Sudder Adawlut, although holding that the purchaser of the share of a parcener in Hindu family property cannot before partition sue for possession of

Bombay
decisions.

(t) *Vitla Butten v. Yamenamma*, 8 Mad. H. C. 6.

(u) *Ante*, § 312.

(x) *Ballojee v. Venkapa*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 216; *Bajee Sudshet v. Pandurang*, Morris, Pt. II. 93. But see the *futwah* in Bomb. Sel. Rep. 42, which seems to admit the right.

Coheir may sell
his share,

any particular part of that property, or predicate that it belongs to him exclusively, yet was of opinion that he may maintain a suit for partition, and thus obtain the share which he has purchased" (y). The Supreme Court, and subsequently the High Court, recognized the right of an undivided member to sell or mortgage his undivided share, and the usage that he should do so. The whole of the previous cases are collected in an elaborate judgment pronounced by Westropp, C. J., in 1873 (z). He admitted that the strict law of the Mitâksharâ, and the usage following it in Mithilâ and Benares, was in accordance with the law laid down by the Full Court of Bengal, but stated that the opposite practice had prevailed in Western India. He concluded his review of the authorities by saying, "On the principle *stare decisis*, which induced Sir Barnes Peacock and his colleagues strictly to adhere to the anti-alienation doctrine of the Mitâksharâ in the provinces subject to their jurisdiction where the authority of that treatise prevails, we at this side of India find ourselves compelled to depart from that doctrine, so far as it denies the right of a Hindu parccener, for valuable consideration, to sell, incumber, or otherwise alien his share in undivided family property. The foregoing authorities lead us to the conclusion that it must be regarded as the settled law of this Presidency, not only that one of several coparceners in a Hindu family may, before partition, and without the assent of his coparceners, sell, mortgage, or otherwise alien, for valuable consideration, his share in the undivided family estate, movable or immovable, but also that such a share may be taken in execution under a judgment against him at the suit of his personal creditor. Were we to hold otherwise, we should undermine many titles which rest upon the course of decision, that, for a long period of time, the Courts at this side of India have steadily taken. Stability of decision is, in our estimation, of far greater importance than a deviation from the special doctrine of the Mitâksharâ upon the right of alienation."

(y) *Per curiam*, 10 Bomb. p. 156, where the cases are cited.

(z) *Vasudev Bhat v. Venkatesh*, 10 Bomb. 139, followed *Fakirappa v. Channapa*, *ibid.* 162, F. B.

The mode in which the Bombay Court enforces this right is by a decree for an account and partition, as already stated (a).

§ 315. The Bombay High Court, however, while favouring the rights of a purchaser for value, show no indulgence to a volunteer; they hold that an undivided coparcener cannot make a gift of his share, or dispose of it by will (b). In the latter point they agree with the High Court of Madras; in the former point they disagree with it. The reason for the view taken by the Bombay Court is, no doubt, that in the case of a gift there is no equity upon which a decree for partition would depend. If, however, the power of disposal is once established, the question would arise whether a gift *actually completed* would not be enforced by a Court of Equity in India, as it certainly would be in England. In the case in Madras (c) there had been a deed of gift duly stamped and registered, followed by possession. In the first of the two Bombay cases where the question arose it does not appear that there had been possession given to the alleged donee, and in the second there certainly had been no such possession (d). A gift without possession is invalid under Hindu law (§ 329). The High Court, however, put their decision upon the simple ground that they were not disposed to carry the assignability of the share of a coparcener in undivided family property any farther than they felt compelled to do by the precedents referred to, and by the traditions of the Supreme Court and Sudder Adawlut in the Bombay Presidency (e).

but not give or devise it.

Power of gift.

§ 316. If, as the Courts of Madras and Bombay lay down, the rights of a purchaser from a coparcener can only be worked out by means of a partition, a further question arises, what date must be taken as fixing the amount of interest he possesses in the family property? For instance, suppose one of two brothers grants a mortgage upon the

Extent of share how ascertained.

(a) Ante, § 309.

(b) *Gungubai v. Ramanna*, 3 Bomb. A. C. 66; *Tukaram v. Ramchandra*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 249; *Udaram v. Ranu Panduji*, 11 Bomb. 76; *Vrandavan Das v. Yamuna Bai*, 12 Bomb. 229.

(c) *Venkatapathy v. Lutchmee*, 6 Mad. Jur. 215.

(d) See cases of *Gangabai* and *Vrandavandas*, *supra*.

(e) 12 Bomb. 231.

family property for his own private benefit, and the transaction runs on until after three more brothers are born, and the father is dead, and then the creditor sues to enforce his claim—has he a lien upon one-third of the property, which was the interest of his debtor at the time of the mortgage, or only upon one-fifth, which is his interest at the time of suit? The latter view seems to be that taken by the Madras High Court in the case of *Vitla Butten* (§ 313). Again, how is the claim to be dealt with, where his share has wholly lapsed by survivorship, and partition has become impossible—as in the case of one of several brothers dying without issue? In the present state of the authorities it would be useless to do more than indicate these difficulties.

Contrary doctrine in Bengal and N. W. Provinces.

§ 317. When we come to the Bengal Courts, and that of the N. W. Provinces, there is a complete unanimity in affirming the early doctrine. In a Mithilâ case which was twice referred to the Pandits, on account of a suspicion of the integrity of one of them, they pronounced, “that a gift of joint undivided property, whether real or personal, was not valid, even to the extent of the donor’s share; for property cannot be sold or given away until it is defined and ascertained, which cannot be done without a division” (*f*). The same point was expressly decided in other cases from the same district (*g*). And exactly the same rule was acted on in cases from other districts, which were governed by the Mitâksharâ (*h*). In 1869 the question was referred to a Full Bench of the High Court of Bengal in consequence of some conflicting decisions of the High Courts of Madras and Bombay. The whole of the previous decisions and the Native texts were elaborately examined, and the Court replied that in cases governed by Mitâksharâ law, one sharer had no authority, without the consent of his co-

(*f*) *Nandram v. Kashee Pande*, 3 S. D. 232 (310); 4 S. D. 70 (89).

(*g*) *Sheo Churn v. Jummun Lal*, 6 S. D. 176 (214); *Sheo Suhaye v. Sreekishen*, 7 S. D. 105 (123); *Mt. Roopna v. Ray Reotee*, S. D. of 1853, 344; *Jivan Lal v. Ram Govind*, 5 S. D. 163 (193).

(*h*) *Sheo Surrin v. Sheo Sohai*, 4 S. D. 158 (201), see note; *Cosserat v. Sudaburt Pershad*, 3 W. R. 210. See decisions of the Court of the N. W. P. cited 3 B. L. R. F. B. p. 42, and 7 N. W. P. H. C. 277. These decisions have been recently approved and followed by the Allahabad High Court. *Chamaili Kuar v. Ram Prasad*, 2 All. 267.

sharers, to dispose of his undivided share, in order to raise money on his own account, and not for the benefit of the family. The Courts stated that an opposite conclusion could only be arrived at, "by over-ruling that current of authorities by which, for nearly half a century, the law appears to have been settled, and in accordance with the principles of which it appears to have been generally understood and acted upon" (i). This ruling has, of course, given the law ever since within the jurisdiction of the High Court of Bengal, and would no doubt be regarded in the N. W. Provinces as the highest confirmation of the previous decisions of that Court (k).

§ 318. Even in Bengal, however, and since the Full Bench decision, the Court has dealt with the equities of the parties in a manner which brings about exactly the same result as is worked out by the Madras and Bombay doctrine (l). In that case the second defendant, who was father and manager of a family governed by the Mitāksharā, mortgaged the family property to the first defendant for a purpose not legally justifiable. The elder son sued on his own behalf and on that of a minor son, to set aside the deed. The Court found that the plaintiff had assented to the transaction, consequently only the interest of the minor was concerned. It did not appear that he had been in any way benefited. The Court, after observing that the result of setting aside the sale unconditionally would be "that the property, on going back, will come to be enjoyed by the joint family as it was before the mortgage and sale; and of necessity, by virtue of the provisions of the Mitāksharā law, will return to the management of the very man (second defendant) who obtained R. 3000 from the first defendant on the pretended security afforded by the mortgage, which did not seem to accord very well with equity and good conscience;" also that the Full Bench decision, which settled (3 B. L. R. F. B. 31) that such a deed might be set aside, refrained

Equities in
favour of alienee,

(i) *Sadabart Prasad v. Foolbash Kooer*, 3 B. L. R., F. B. 31.

(k) *Nathu Lall v. Chadi Sahi*, 4 B. L. R. A. C. 15; *Hannman Dutt v. Baboo Kishen*, 8 B. L. R. 358; *Mt. Phoolbas Kooer v. Lalla Jugessar*, 14 W. R. 340; 18 W. R. 48. Reversed on another point; 3 I. A. 7; *Bunsee Lall v. Shaikh Aoladh*, 22 W. R. 552.

(l) *Mahabeer Persad v. Ramyad Singh*, 12 B. L. R. 90. See 11 Bomb. 76.

enforced by
partition.

from saying on what terms such relief was to be granted, proceeded to point out that the father might at any moment claim a partition. "And plainly the first defendant is in equity entitled as against the father to insist upon his calling his share into being, and realising it for their benefit. He obtained their money by representing that he had a power to charge the joint family property, which he knew at the time he did not possess: he is, therefore, at least bound to make good to them that representation, so far as he can, by the exercise of such proprietary right over the same property as he individually possesses. Substantially the same reasoning applies to the eldest son (plaintiff), who aided his father in effecting the mortgage. On the whole, then, we are of opinion that a decree ought to be given to the plaintiffs to the effect that the property be recovered by the plaintiffs for the joint family, but that this decree must be accompanied by a declaration that on recovery, the property be held and enjoyed by the family in defined shares, viz., one-third belonging to the father (second defendant), one-third to the eldest son (the plaintiff), and one-third to the second son, a minor; and that it be also declared that the shares of the father and of the eldest son be jointly and severally subject to the lien thereon of the first defendant for the repayment of the sum of R. 3000 advanced by the first defendant to the second defendant, and interest thereon at six per cent. from the date of the loan until repayment."

Judicial Com-
mittee.

Upon this decision the Judicial Committee remarked (*m*), "There appears to be little substantial difference between the law thus enunciated and that which has been established at Madras and Bombay; except that the application of the former may depend upon the view the Judges may take of the equities of the particular case; whereas the latter establishes a broad and general rule defining the right of the creditor."

§ 319. The question now discussed has never come before the Privy Council in such a form as to require decision. In

the case of *Bhugwandeem v. Myna Bae* (n), there is a *dictum* that "between coparceners there can be no alienation by one without the consent of the others." In another case, where one of several joint proprietors had mortgaged his share, the Court said, "The sharers, however, do not appear to have been members of a joint and undivided Hindu family, but to have enjoyed their respective shares in severalty. It is therefore clear that the mortgagor had power to pledge his own undivided share in these villages" (o). On the other hand, in cases where the point was directly taken, but unnecessary to be decided, the Judicial Committee treated it as still doubtful (p). In the last case where the point arose the Judicial Committee appear to treat the law in Madras and Bombay as being settled in the manner above stated, while they treated the contrary ruling of the Bengal Courts as a matter still open to doubt in cases within their jurisdiction (q).

§ 320. The remedies possessed by one member of a family against alienations made by another member, depend of course upon the view taken by the Courts of the validity of such alienations. According to the law administered in Madras and Bombay, such alienations, whatever they may profess to convey, are valid to the extent of the alienor's own interest in the property. Hence no suit could be maintained for the absolute cancelment of such an alienation, still less for recovery of the whole property, on the ground that the illegal alienation by the father or other member had given the plaintiff the right to seek possession for himself. But when the alienee takes exclusive possession of any specific portion of the joint property, he will be liable to be turned out at the suit of the other coparceners; for till partition each has an undivided interest in the whole, and of course the vendee, claiming under one co-sharer, cannot be in a better position than the person under whom he claims (r). And even where there has been no dispos-

Remedies
against alien-
ation.

(n) 11 M. I. A. at p. 516.

(o) *Byjnath v. Ramoodeem*, 1 I. A. at p. 119.

(p) *Girdharee Lall v. Kantoo Lall*, 1 I. A. at p. 329; *Mt. Phoolbas v. Lalla Jogeshur*, 3 I. A. at p. 27; *Deendyal v. Jugdeep Narain*, 4 I. A. at p. 252.

(q) *Suraj Bansi Koer v. Sheo Proshad Singh*, 6 I. A. 88.

(r) *Venkatachella v. Chinnaya*, 5 Mad. H. C. 166; ante, § 271.

session, if one member of an undivided family has by gift, mortgage, alienation, or devise, disposed of the family property to a greater extent than the law entitles him to do, the other members have a right to have the transaction declared illegal, and set aside so far as it is illegal (s). And in such a suit the alienation would be set aside, wholly or in part, according as the doctrine of Bengal or Madras and Bombay was held to govern the case.

Not a forfeiture.

Even according to the rules laid down by the Bengal Courts, a son is not entitled upon proof of alienation by his father, to apply to have his own name substituted on the registry in place of his father's name, and to have his own exclusive possession and ownership decreed, in place of that previously existing in the head of the family (t). But it has been held that he is entitled to sue for possession of the whole property on behalf of the undivided family, although that whole includes the share of the person who makes the alienation (u).

Equities on setting aside alienation.

§ 321. It does not however follow that any member of the family can set aside such alienations unconditionally. The rule is that the party setting aside the sale must make good to the purchaser the amount he has paid, so far as that amount has benefited himself, either by entering into the joint assets, or from having been applied in paying off charges upon the property which would have been a lien upon it in his hands. In the leading case in Bengal (v) the following question was referred to a Full Bench Court, "Whether under the Mitâksharâ law, a son who recovers his ancestral estate from a purchaser from the father, on proof that there was no such necessity as would legalise the sale, and that he never acquiesced in the alienation, is

(s) *Kanakurty v. Venkataramdas*, 4 Mad. Jur. 251; *Kanth Narain v. Prem Lal*, 3 W. R. 102; *Raja Ram v. Luchmun Pershad*, 8 W. R. 16; *Retoo Raj v. Lalljee Pandey*, 24 W. R. 399. As to declaratory decrees, see *Dorasinga v. Katama Nachiar*, 2 I. A. 169. As to the period of limitation see Act IX of 1871, Sched. II. §§ 125—127; *Raja Ram v. Luchmun Pershad*, *ub. sup.*

(t) *Chutter Dharee v. Bikao Lal*, S. D. of 1850, 282; *Kanth Narain v. Prem Lal*, 3 W. R. 102. See cases in N. W. P. cited 7 N. W. P. H. C. 277.

(u) *Haunman Dutt v. Baboo Kishen*, 8 B. L. R. 358; *Jugdeep v. Deendial*, 12 B. L. R. 100. See as to the right of any one to sue in respect of his own share, *Mt. Phoolbas Koor v. Lalla Jugessur*, 18 W. R. 48.

(v) *Modhoo Dyal v. Kolbur Singh*, B. L. R. Sup. Vol. 1018; 9 W. R. 511 followed *Haunman Dutt v. Baboo Kishen*, 8 B. L. R. 358.

bound in equity to refund the purchase money before recovering possession of the alienated property ?” Peacock, C. J., replied that “in the absence of proof of circumstances which would give the purchaser an equitable right to compel a refund from the son, the latter would be entitled to recover without refunding the purchase money or any part of it. We ought to add that if it is proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the purchase money was carried to the assets of the joint estate, and that the son had the benefit of his share of it, he could not recover his share of the estate without refunding his share of the purchase money ; so if it should be proved that the sale was effected for the purpose of paying off a valid incumbrance on the estate which was binding upon the son, and the purchase money was employed in freeing the estate from the incumbrance, the purchaser would be entitled to stand in the place of the incumbrancer, notwithstanding the incumbrance might be such that the incumbrancer could not have compelled the immediate discharge of it, and that the decree for the recovery by the son of the ancestral property, or of his share of it, as the case might be, would be good ; but should be subject to such right of the purchaser to stand in the place of the incumbrancer. It appears to me, however, that the *onus* lies upon the defendant to show that the purchase money was so applied. I do not concur with the decision which has been referred to (x), in which it is said that “in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that the price received by the father became a part of the assets of the joint family.” If the father was not entitled to raise the money by sale of the estate, and the son is entitled to set aside that sale, the *onus* lies on the person who contends that the son is bound to refund the purchase money before he can recover the estate, to show that the son had the benefit of his share of that purchase money. If it should appear that he consented to take the benefit of the purchase money with a knowledge of the facts, it would be evidence of his acquiescence in the sale” (y).

Equities on
setting aside
alienation

(x) 6 W. R. 71.

(y) Acc. *Gangabai v. Vamanji*, 2 Bomb. 318.

for personal
debt of coheir ;

§ 322. Hence, when the sale was made to discharge the personal debt of the alienor, it was considered that there was no equity to refund the purchase money, on setting aside the sale. Nor did it make any difference that the defendant was an innocent purchaser for value at an auction. He had every opportunity of making enquiry, and must have known the extreme danger of purchasing an interest which had been originally bought from a single member of a joint undivided family living under the Mitāksharâ law (z).

where sale partly
justifiable.

§ 323. An intermediate case is where the sale of the whole property is not justifiable, but a sale of part would have been justifiable, or where part of the consideration was applied to purposes so beneficial to the family, that in respect of it an equity arises in favour of the purchaser as against a member of the family seeking to set aside the transaction. In one case (a) the suit was by a son to set aside a conditional deed of sale executed by his father and his father's brother, so far as it affected his father's moiety of the property. It appeared that the deed was executed upon a loan of money, part of which was properly borrowed on grounds of legal necessity, while the remainder was not. The Principal Sudr Amin treated the deed as valid in respect of a portion of the land in proportion to that part of the consideration money which was borrowed for and spent in a matter of legal necessity, and void as to the residue of the land conveyed. Sir B. Peacock, C.J., considered the correctness of this principle to be very doubtful, and intimated that in such a case the more reasonable course would be, that upon the defendant's establishing the necessity for part of the loan, the Court should decree that the deed should be set aside, and the plaintiff recover possession upon his paying the amount which was legally taken up for necessary purposes recognized by law, or that the deed should be set aside in proportion. No decision was given, however, as no relief could be given for want of necessary parties. In some later cases the course adopted was

Equities on
setting aside.

(z) *Nathu Lall v. Chadi Sahi*, 4 B. L. R., A. C. 15.

(a) *Rajaram v. Luchmun Pershad*, 4 B. L. R., A. C. 118—125.

to set aside the deed on payment of so much of the consideration money as was a proper charge upon the estate (b).

So also, even though the charge has not been created for family purposes, if there are circumstances of laches or acquiescence which would render it inequitable that the deed should be set aside unconditionally, the Court will compel a refund of the purchase money (c).

§ 324. In some cases where the Court considered that the plaintiff should have offered to refund the purchase money, and the plaint contained no such offer, the suit was dismissed, the plaintiff being at liberty to bring a fresh suit differently framed (d). This seems to be a mere question of pleading. If, as Sir B. Peacock said (e), the *onus* lies on the defendant to allege and establish circumstances which entitle him to such repayment, one would imagine that the proper course would be for the plaintiff to claim to have the deed set aside, as not being for a matter of legal necessity or with the consent of the family, and for the defendant to get rid of this case, wholly or in part, by showing the circumstances which made out his equity to repayment. Where the plaintiff deliberately elected to rest his case upon an allegation of wasteful and extravagant borrowing, and failed to make out that case, the Court refused to allow him to repay the purchase money, and have the deed cancelled (f).

§ 325. When we come to Bengal law, as laid down by Jīmūta Vāhana, the whole of the above distinctions at once vanish. I have already (§ 232) pointed out the process by which he got rid of the principle which pervades the Benares law, that property in a son is by birth, and established the opposite principle, that a son is simply heir presumptive to his father, and entitled to nothing more than his father chooses to leave him. This doctrine, in which an

(b) *Shurrat Chunder v. Bholanath*, 15 B. L. R. 350. See too the analogous cases of alienations by a widow, *Phoolchand v. Rughoobuns*, 9 W. R. 108; *Mutteeram v. Gopaul Sahoo*, 11 B. L. R. 416; *Konwur Doorgonath v. Ram Chunder*, 4 I. A. 52, 66.

(c) *Surub Narain v. Shew Gobind*, 11 B. L. R. Appx. 29.

(d) 11 B. L. R. 416, Appx. 29. See *Durga Prasad v. Nawadish Ally*, 1 All. 591.

(e) *Modho Dyal v. Kolbur Singh*, B. L. R. Sup. Vol. 1018.

(f) *Muddun Gopal v. Ram Buksh*, 6 W. R. 74.

admission that alienations by a father of ancestral property were immoral was coupled with an assertion that they were valid, naturally exercised the minds of English lawyers a good deal. They would have accepted the assertion as a matter of course, but they were perplexed by the admission. Accordingly we find that Mr. W. MacNaghten laid down the law in a way which was really nothing more than the Mitāksharâ over again, and Sir Hyde East in 1819 took very much the same view (§ 233). The *futwahs* of the pandits were persistently given in accordance with the doctrines of Jīmûta Vâhana. But these *futwahs* appeared to be contradictory, because they were applied to two different states of fact, viz., alienations and distributions. To an English lawyer it seemed obvious, that if a man could give his property to strangers, he could also give it to his sons; and that if he could give everything to one son, to the exclusion of the others, *à fortiori* he could give it to all of them in any proportions he wished. But a Hindu pandit treated one proceeding as an alienation and the other as a partition. He produced one set of texts from Jīmûta Vâhana to show that the former proceeding was valid, and another set of texts, also from Jīmûta Vâhana, to show that the latter was invalid. It is not surprising that there was a good deal of confusion before the law was finally settled. As regards the right of a father in Bengal to make an unequal partition among his sons, it can hardly be said that the law is satisfactorily settled even now.

Apparent
contradiction.

Alienations by
father.

§ 326. The earliest reported case is in 1792, when a bequest (*g*) by the Zemindar of Nuddea of his entire ancestral Zemindary to his eldest son was supported. The document recited that the Zemindary was impartible, in which case of course it was unnecessary. The opinions of numerous pandits in different parts of the country are said to have been taken, and the majority of them declared, that whether the Zemindary had been previously exempt from division or not, the gift settling the Zemindary on the eldest son with a provision for the younger ones was valid. This view

(*g*) The document is sometimes spoken of as a will, sometimes as a deed of gift; it seems really to have been the former.

was affirmed by the Sudr Court. Mr. Colebrooke appends a note to the case in which he agrees with the pandits' opinion, as being in accordance with the doctrines of Jímûta Vâhana. He ends by saying, "No opinion was taken from the law officers of the Sudr Court in this case. But it has been received as a precedent which settles the question of a father's power to make an actual disposition of his property, even contrary to the injunctions of the law, whether by gift or by will, or by distribution of shares" (*h*). This decision was followed in 1800 by the Supreme Court, which affirmed the validity of the wills of *Rajah Nobkissen* and *Nemy Churn Mullick*, by which ancestral immovable property had been disposed of, in the former case at all events, to the prejudice of the testator's sons (*i*). And in 1812 the Sudr Court, after consulting their pandits, held that a gift by a father of his whole estate, real and personal, ancestral and otherwise, to a younger son during the life of the elder was valid, though immoral, the gift of the whole ancestral landed property being forbidden (*k*). In 1816, however, the law was unsettled again by the case of *Bhowanny Churn v. The Heirs of Ramkaunt* (*l*). That case will be discussed more fully hereafter (§ 415), but it is sufficient here to point out, that it was a case where a father had made an unequal partition among his sons. The pandits practically found, that as a partition it was invalid from its inequality, and that it could not be supported as a gift, because there had been no delivery of possession. The result was that the partition was set aside. The case is followed by an elaborate note in which the opinions of the pandits in this and the two previous cases in the Sudr Court are examined, and the writer intimates that those cases had probably been incorrectly decided, so far as they respect the ancestral immovable estate (*m*). It is evident, however, that the pandits would

Alienations by father.

Rights of sons.

(*h*) *Eshanchund v. Eshorchund*, 1 S. D. 2. The judgment of the Sudr Court will be found in 2 Stra. H. L. 447.

(*i*) F. MacN. 356, 340.

(*k*) *Ramkoomar v. Kishenkunker*, 2 S. D. 42 (52); F. MacN. 277.

(*l*) 2 S. D. 202 (259); F. MacN. 283, 294.

(*m*) These conflicting opinions were probably before Sir Hyde East in 1820,

Rights of sons.

not have agreed in this view, for we find that in 1821 they pronounced opinions affirming a gift by a father of an ancestral taluq to one of his eleven sons (*n*), and in 1829 they supported a sale by a Zemindar of an ancestral taluq during the life of his son. They laid down the broad principle, "The law as current in Bengal recognizes no proprietary right in the son, so long as that of the father is existent; and therefore in the case stated, as *Ram Shunker's* (the father's) right in the soil was existent, *Mohun Chund* (the son) could have no claim upon it" (*o*). Finally, in 1831, the same question arose again in the Supreme Court of Bengal, and was referred to the Judges of the Sudr Dewanny, who returned the following certificate: "On mature consideration of the points referred to us, we are unanimously of opinion that the only doctrine that can be held by the Sudr Dewanny Adalut, consistently with the decisions of the Court, and the customs and usages of the people, is, that a Hindu, who has sons, can sell, give, or pledge, without their consent, immovable ancestral property, situated in the province of Bengal; and that without the consent of the sons, he can by will prevent, alter or affect their succession to such property" (*p*). This certificate has ever since been accepted as settling the law in Bengal, on the points to which it refers (*q*). Of course there never was any doubt as to the right of a Bengal proprietor to dispose of his property to the prejudice of relations other than his own issue (*r*).

Rights of coparceners.

§ 327. As regards those who are coparceners in Bengal, that is brothers, cousins, or the like, who have taken property jointly by descent, or who have acquired it jointly, there is also no difficulty. In Bengal the right of every

when he pronounced his judgment in *Cossinath Bysack v. Hurrosoondery* (2 M. Dig. 198), where he balances against each other two conflicting sets of texts, with an evident consciousness that he had got into a labyrinth to which he did not possess the clue.

(*n*) *Rajkristno v. Tarany Churn*, F. MacN. 265, Appx. viii.

(*o*) *Kumka Karunt v. Gooroo Govind*, 4 S. D. 322 (410).

(*p*) Morton, 90; 6 S. D. 73 (85). A note follows that this certificate overrules the case of *Bhowanny Churn*. It really did nothing of the sort.

(*q*) See *per curiam*, S. D. of 1859, 250; S. D. of 1860, i. 489.

(*r*) F. MacN. 360; *Bhowani Pershad v. Mt. Taramunnec*, 3 S. D. 138 (184); *Sheodas v. Kunwul Bas*, 3 S. D. 234 (313); *Tarnce Churn v. Mt. Pasee*, 3 S. D. 397 (530). As to the rights of an adopted son, see *ante*, § 148 and note.

coparcener is to a definite share, though to an unascertained portion of the whole property (§ 238). This right passes by inheritance to female or other relations, just as if it were already divided, and it may be disposed of by each male proprietor just as if it were separate or self-acquired property. And such alienations will be taken into account as part of his share in the event of a partition. But of course no one can dispose of more than his share, unless by consent of the others, or for necessary purposes (*s*). And so an undivided coparcener may in Bengal lease out his own share, and put his lessee in possession (*t*). But as a son has no interest in his father's property during the father's life, a sale of such property by him during the father's life would be wholly void, and it has been ruled that if the purchaser had got into possession, the son himself might recover the property from him when his own title as heir accrued. The purchaser, however, would have a right to recover the purchase-money (*u*).

Rights of coparceners.

327A. It has been held in the Allahabad High Court that an agreement by one coparcener not to alienate his share to any one except his coparcener is valid, and may be enforced, and that an alienation to a stranger made in violation of such an agreement may be set aside at the suit of the other coparceners (*v*). The former part of the ruling is of course beyond doubt. But it may be questioned whether the latter part is equally sound. Can an agreement by a member of a family not to exercise his ordinary rights of property be enforced against a stranger, who has dealt with him in ignorance of such an agreement? In other words, can the agreement operate as anything more than a trust in favour of the other members of the family, which is ineffectual against a purchaser for value without notice of the trust?

(*s*) *Rajbulubh v. Mt. Buneta*, 1 S. D. 44 (59); *Prannath v. Calishunker*, 1 S. D. 45 (60); *Anund Chund v. Kishen Mohun*, 1 S. D. 115 (152), where see Mr. Colebrooke's notes. *Ramkumhaee v. Bung Chund*, 3 S. D. 17 (22); *Kounla Kant v. Ram Huree*, 4 S. D. 196 (247); *Sakhawat v. Trilok Singh*, 5 S. D. 338 (397); 2 W. MacN. 291, 294, 296, 306 n., 313.

(*t*) *Ram Deebul v. Mitterjeet*, 17 W. R. 420; *Macdonald v. Lalla Shib Dyal*, 21 W. R. 17.

(*u*) *Gunganarain v. Bulram Bonnerjee*, 2 M. Dig. 152.

(*v*) *Lakhmi Chand v. Tori Lal*, 1 All. 618. See post §§ 356, 410.

Cases of gift.

§ 328. Throughout the preceding paragraphs no distinction has been drawn between gifts and transfers for valuable consideration. The Bombay High Court, it will be remembered, allow a coparcener to alien his undivided share for value, but not by way of gift (§ 315), and according to the view taken by the High Court of Bengal, equities would arise in favour of a purchaser for value which would not exist in favour of a donee. The Madras High Court seems to put both on the same footing. Where a transaction can only be supported on the plea of necessity, of course a gift could never be valid. An exception may exist perhaps in favour of gifts of a certain part of the property for pious purposes. These will be treated of at length in Chapter XII on Religious Endowments. Where property is absolutely at the disposal of its owner, as being the property of a father under Bengal law, or the separate or self-acquired property of any person, he may give it away as freely as he may sell or mortgage it (*x*), subject to a certain extent to the claims of those who are entitled to be maintained by him (*y*). And where a gift is valid it may be accompanied with conditions, such as that the donor should be maintained by the donee during his lifetime, and that his exequial ceremonies should be performed after his death in consideration of the gift (*z*); that the donee should forego claims against the donor, and should defray expenses of the worship of the idol (*a*); that the property should pass to another in a particular event (*b*). So a *donatio mortis causâ*, revocable if the donor should recover from an illness, is valid (*c*). But a gift will be invalid which creates any estate unknown to, or forbidden by Hindu law (*d*); or which contains provisions which are repugnant to the nature of the grant, such as a

Gifts.

Conditional.

Invalid.

(*x*) *Saminadien v. Durmarajien*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 291; and see authorities cited *ante*, § 327, note (*s*), 2 Dig. 159.

(*y*) As to the extent to which this limitation applies, see *post*, § 384.

(*z*) *Ram Narayan v. Mt. Sut Bunsêe*, 3 S. D. 377 (503); see *note*.

(*a*) *Madhubchunder v. Bamasoonderee*, S. D. of 1853, 103.

(*b*) *Soorjeemonee v. Denobundo Mullick*, 9 M. I. A. 123, 135; *per curiam*, 4 B. L. R. O. C. 192.

(*c*) *Visalatchi v. Subbu Pillay*, 6 Mad. H. C. 270.

(*d*) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 4 B. L. R. O. C. 103; 9 B. L. R. P. C. 377.

restraint upon alienation or partition (e). And of course the same principles would apply to a transfer for value.

§ 329. It is essential to the validity of a gift that possession should be given to the donee. The only apparent exception to the rule being, that a promise to give for pious purposes creates a moral obligation so strong that it may be enforced (f). But this exception would not be admitted in these days (g). But it is sufficient if the change of possession is such as the nature of the case admits of. Therefore, where the gift is of land, which is in the possession of tenants, receipt of rent by the donee is enough, even though it is received through a person who received it formerly as agent for the donor; or delivery to the donee of the deed of gift, and of the counterpart lease executed to the donor by the tenants (h). So a gift may be made to an absent person, if his acceptance of it is certain, but if it is unknown whether he will accept or not, the right of the donor continues (i). And it was stated by a pandit in Bengal that a gift would be valid, even though the donor retained possession, if it was expressly stated in the deed that he was holding the property as a loan from the donee (k). So in the Punjâb it has been held, that where the donee is incapable of taking possession, as being a minor or a lunatic, the possession of the donor is enough, if it is expressly asserted to be in trust for the donee (l). And when the donee was in possession before the gift, the continuance of his possession is sufficient, without any new delivery (m). It follows from

Possession.

9 L.R. Cal
854

What is possession.

(e) See *post*, § 356; F. MacN. 327; *Venkatramanna v. Bramanna*, 4 Mad. H. C. 345; *Nabob Amiruddowla v. Nateri Strinavasa*, 6 Mad. H. C. 356; *Thakoor Kapilnauth v. Government*, 13 B. L. R. 445, 457. See *per curiam*, 9 B. L. R., P. C. 395, 406; and *Renaud v. Tourangeau*, L. R., 2 P. C. 4. As to agreements between coparceners not to divide, see *post*, § 410.

(f) *Mitâksharâ*, iii. 6, § 2, 3, translated 1 W. MacN. 217; *Yājñavalkya*, 2 Dig. 160; *Kātyāyana*, ib. 170; *Hārīta*, ib. 171; *Vrihaspati*, ib. 174; *Nārada*, ib. 175; *Bhōwanny Churn v. Ramkaunt*, 2 S. D. 202 (259); *Venkatatchella v. Thattammal*, 4 Mad. H. C. 460.

(g) *Manjunadhaya v. Tangamma*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 24; *Nursing v. Mohunt Khakee*, S. D. of 1857, 1000.

(h) *Bank of Hindustan v. Premchund*, 5 Bomb. O. C. 83; *Wannathan v. Keyakadath*, 6 Mad. H. C. 194; *Narjivan v. Naran Haribhai*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 31.

(i) *Çrikrishna*, cited with approval by Macpherson, J., 4 B. L. R., O. C. 291.

(k) *Sheodas v. Kunwul Bas*, 3 S. D. 234 (313).

(l) *Punjâb Cust.* 75.

(m) *Meyajee v. Metha Nuthoo*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 80, 89. This and the previous case were decided under Muhammedan law, which in this respect agrees with the Hindu law.

Donee must be
in existence.

the above principles, that whether the gift be *in præsentis* or *in futuro* the donee must be a person in existence, and capable of accepting the gift at the time it takes effect (*n*). The only exceptions are the cases of an infant in the womb, or a person adopted after the death of the husband under an authority from him. Such persons are by a fiction of law considered to have been in existence at the time of the death (*o*). And if a gift is made to a class of persons some of whom are incapable of taking under it, as being unborn, or from remoteness, or any other reason, it is invalid as to all. Because the intention of the donor was that all should take, not that one should take to the exclusion of the others (*p*).

Gift to a class.

Valid against
creditors.

A gift once completed by delivery or its equivalent is binding upon the donor himself, and upon his representatives, and is valid even against his creditors; provided it was made *bonâ fide*, that is with the honest intention of passing the property, and not merely as a fraudulent contrivance to conceal the real ownership (*q*).

Necessity for
delivery where
transfer is for
consideration.

§ 330. Another question which has given rise to numerous and conflicting decisions, is as to the necessity for delivery of possession where the transfer is not by way of gift, but by way of mortgage or sale of land. Such a transaction, even without possession, would, of course, be valid and enforceable as against the transferor. But the importance of the question would arise where the rights of third parties were concerned. For instance, where the same property was mortgaged or sold twice, and possession given to the last transferee. If the first transfer was valid without possession, the first transferee could bring ejectment for the land. If it required possession, his only remedy would be against his transferor by suit for specific performance or for damages. The point

(*n*) This is the actual time of giving, that is the date of the gift, if *inter vivos*, or the death of the testator, if by will; not the possible time of receiving. See 9 B. L. R. 399; *Soudaminy v. Jogesh Chunder*, 2 Calc. 265, *post*, § 355.

(*o*) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 103; 9 B. L. R. 377, 397, 400, 404.

(*p*) *Soudaminy v. Jogesh Chunder*, 2 Calc. 268; per Norman, C. J., 8 B. L. R. 410; Act X of 1865, s. 102.

(*q*) *Sabapathy v. Panyandy*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 61; *Abhachari v. Ramachendraya*, 1 Mad. H. C. 393; *Gnanabhai v. Srinavasa*, 4 Mad. H. C. 84.

has been twice raised by the Judicial Committee, and the first matter for consideration will be, how far their Lordships' remarks are to be taken as concluding the matter. In the first case the appellant had been engaged in litigation for a Zemindary from 1835 till 1858, when the suit was finally decided in his favour. In 1844, before any decree had been given in his favour, he sold one-quarter share of the whole property to the assignor of the respondent for R. 75,000. It was found that less than one-third of the purchase money was paid by the purchaser, and the appellant contended that the transaction, though on its face a sale, was really only intended to create a security for advances made to enable him to carry on his suit. The Sudr Court of Bengal found in favour of the purchaser, holding that the contract was one of absolute sale and purchase, and that a complete title to the lands passed, by virtue of the bill of sale, on its execution. This decree was reversed by the Privy Council. After remarking that the course adopted by the Sudr Court in remanding the suit left open the very point, whether the contract was one of sale or security, their Lordships proceeded to say, "It is not easy to see what principle of an English Court of Equity, supposing such to be properly applicable to the case, would support the conclusions to which the Judges of the Sudr Court have come upon the facts before them. Their business was to decide the rights of the parties under the particular contract; and upon the facts found by the Court below, according to equity and good conscience. They seem to have ruled that the effect of the execution of a bill of sale by a Hindu vendor is, to use the phraseology of English law, to pass an estate irrespectively of actual delivery of possession, giving to the instrument the effect of a conveyance operating by the Statute of Uses. Whether such a conclusion would be warranted in any case, is, in their Lordships' opinion, very questionable. It is certainly not supported by the two cases cited in the judgment under review, in both of which actual possession seems to have passed from the vendor to the purchaser (r). To support it, the execu-

Privy Council
decision.

(r) The two cases were *Gopeechurn v. Koroona*, S. D. of 1857, 225; *Sur-*

Privy Council
decisions.

tion of the bill of sale must be treated as a constructive transfer of possession. But how can there be any such transfer, actual or constructive, upon a contract under which the vendor sells that of which he has not possession, and to which he may never establish a title? The bill of sale in such a case can only be evidence of a contract to be performed *in futuro*, and upon the happening of a contingency, of which the purchaser may claim a specific performance if he comes into Court showing that he has himself done all that he was bound to do. In the present case the purchaser had alleged that he was in that condition, having paid the whole of the price at the date of the execution of the instrument; but that allegation has been found to be false." The Committee then proceeded to point out that, under those circumstances, the purchaser would not have been entitled to a specific performance, since the contract sued upon was of a speculative, not to say a gambling, nature; and the consideration for the contract had failed, since its object was to procure an immediate supply of money, the amount of which was fixed upon a calculation of the risk undertaken by the purchaser at a sum far below the real value of the thing sold. Finally, their Lordships intimated that the real nature of the arrangement was one for successive advances of money, and not for outright sale(s). This judgment was followed by the Privy Council in a very similar case, where A. had executed to B. what purported to be a deed of sale of half of a property for which A. was suing C., in consideration of payments made and to be made by B. to A., to enable the latter to carry on the suit. It was found that the payments had not been made, and the Privy Council held that the document was not a sale on which B. could sue to eject A., but only an agreement for a future transfer, upon which the remedy was by suit for specific performance, accompanied by an

bonarain v. Maharaj Singh, S. D. of 1858, 601. As to the latter case their Lordships were certainly mistaken. The purchaser sued for possession, but was refused it, on the ground that though the sale was completed by consent, the vendor had a right to retain possession till the payment in full, which had not been made.

(s) *Perhlad Sein v. Baboo Budhoo*, 12 M. I. A. 300, 306—309.

averment that B. had performed his side of the contract, or been prevented from performing it by A. (t).

It does not seem to me that either of these cases decides that a document, intended to operate as a transfer *in presenti* of a specific piece of immovable property, would be invalid because possession was not given under it. In both cases the Judicial Committee held that the document was not intended so to operate. In both cases, too, the sale was not of a specific piece of property, but of a share in something afterwards to be recovered. Something remained to be done between the parties before the purchaser could say that he had a claim to any definite field or house. But no doubt the judgment in the first case does intimate a very strong opinion that a sale will be invalid as such, first, if the vendor cannot give possession, and secondly, if he does not give possession. The two propositions are of course quite distinct. I shall examine first the native texts, and next the decided cases upon these points.

Their effect considered.

§ 331. I am not aware of any native authority bearing upon the supposed incapacity of a person out of possession to sell his right to property, so as to enable his vendee to sue for possession on his own behalf. But it has been repeatedly decided that an assignment of a *chose in action* is valid, and that the assignee may sue upon it in his own name, without joining the assignor, and without obtaining the consent of the party liable on the obligation; and this doctrine has been equally applied in cases where the claim was to an interest in land (u). The Civil Procedure Code also recognizes the right of the transferee of a decree to have it executed on his own behalf (x). On principle, therefore, there seems to be no reason why an owner of land, out of possession, should not be able to place his assignee in exactly the same position as himself in regard

Where vendor is himself out of possession.

(t) *Bhobosunduree v. Issurchunder*, 11 B. L. R. 36.

(u) *Saadut Ali v. Collector of Sarun*, S. D. of 1858, 840; *Moheshur Buksh v. Durpnarain*, ib. 955; *Jugmohun v. Mt. Budden Kooer*, 9 W. R. 243; *Munrunjun v. Leelanund*, 11 W. R. 5; *Kristna v. Balarama*, 1 Mad. H. C. 139; *Anon. v. Muttusawmiya*, ib. 140; *Kadarbacha v. Rungasawmy*, ib. 150; *Vembakum v. Moonesawmy*, 4 Mad. H. C. 176; *Balapa v. Antajee*, Morris, 42; *Dayabhai v. Dullabhram*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 133; *Kanhaiya Lal v. Domingo*, 1 All. 732.

(x) Act X of 1877, s. 232.

Conflict of
decisions.

to the land, whatever that position may be. This also seems to have been the view taken by the Privy Council in a somewhat similar case. There a Zemindar, whose land was out on lease, made a fresh lease to a third party to commence from the end of the existing term. When the time came, the Zemindar obstructed his lessee in obtaining possession, and the latter brought a suit which was framed as for an injunction against interference by the Zemindar, and for specific performance. In decreeing in his favour the Privy Council animadverted "upon the inaccurate and artificial character of the pleadings." They said: "The plaintiff's right of action depended entirely upon the lease, which entitled him to possession of the Zemindary; and if that possession had been usurped by the Zemindar, the plaintiff ought to have brought ejectment. The prayer of his plaint seems rather to be for an injunction to restrain the Zemindar from collecting the revenues of his Zemindary, against the terms of his own authority to the plaintiff. But the High Court of Judicature appear to treat the suit as one for specific performance, which it could not be, if, according to their opinion, the lease was not an executory contract" (y). There is, however, an abundance of decisions upon the point, though unfortunately they are of a very conflicting character. The *dictum* of the Judicial Committee has been accepted by the High Court of Bombay, as establishing the broad rule that a vendor out of possession cannot convey a title which will enable his vendee to sue a third person for recovery of possession (z). To the same extent it appears to have been applied by the High Court of Bengal, in a case where nothing appears except that the assignor never at any time had had possession of the property which he assigned (a). In other cases there were the further circumstances that the transactions, like those decided upon in the Privy Council, were for a division of property then in litiga-

(y) *Kamala Naik v. Pitchacootty*, 10 M. I. A. 386, 395, affirming 1 Mad. H. C. 153.

(z) *Girdhar v. Daji*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 4; *Kachu v. Kachoba*, 10 Bomb. 491; *Lalubhai v. Bai Amrit*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 299.

(a) *Ram Khelawun v. Mt. Oudh Kooer*, 21 W. R. 101.

tion, and were clearly opposed to public policy (b). On the other hand, in two cases decided by the High Court of Bengal, before the Privy Council case, it was ruled that a person out of possession, but who had a right to possession, might convey his title to a third party, and that the latter might bring ejectment upon that title against any one who had an inferior title (c). The same point has again come before the High Court for consideration since those decisions, and they have ruled that the *dicta* of the Judicial Committee must be taken subject to the facts of the particular cases. Where the vendor had been in peaceable possession, and then been dispossessed, they have ruled that a sale of his title carried with it the right to eject (d). The same decision has been given in still later cases, in which it is stated that the vendor was out of possession, but it does not appear whether he had previously been in possession (e).

§ 332. Upon the second point, viz., the necessity for delivery in order to perfect a transfer by one who is capable of transferring, there is a good deal of native authority. Upon Hindu principles, it is difficult to see why delivery of possession should be required. The necessity for it in the case of gifts seems to arise from the principle that property can never be in abeyance (§ 422). *Vijñaneśwara* says, "Gift consists in the relinquishment of one's own right, and the creation of the right of another; and the creation of another man's right is completed on that other's acceptance of the gift, but not otherwise" (f). Now in the case of a mortgage or sale, which is necessarily a bilateral proceeding, the transaction itself involves acceptance, and delivery is not necessary to establish it. There are no doubt texts which seem to take the contrary view. These, however, occur in the chapters of legal works which treat of evidence,

Where vendor is
in possession.

(b) *Tara Soonduree v. Collector of Mymensingh*, 13 B. L. R. 495; *Boodhun Singh v. Mt. Luteefun*, 22 W. R. 535; *Bishonath Dey v. Chunder Mohun*, 23 W. R. 165.

(c) *Prankrishna v. Biswambhar*, 2 B. L. R. A. C. 207, overruling *Dinomonee v. Gyrutoollah*, 2 W. R. 138; *Kumurooddeen v. Shaikh Bhadho*, 11 W. R. 134.

(d) *Bikan Singh v. Mt. Parbutty*, 22 W. R. 99; *Gungahurry v. Raghubram*, 14 B. L. R. 307; *Nittymanund v. Shama Churn*, 23 W. R. 163.

(e) *Aulock v. Aulock*, 25 W. R. 48; *Bissessur v. Joy Kishore*, ib. 223.

(f) *Mitāksharā*, iii. 6, § 2, translated 1 W. MacN. 217.

Where vendor is
in possession.

and appear to refer to two different matters, viz., the effect of possession as evidencing a right, and the effect of possession as destroying a right. For instance Nârada says, "Written proof, witnesses and possession, these are the three kinds of evidence on which the right of property rests, (and by means of which) a creditor may recover a loan. A document remains always evidence, witnesses as long as they live, and possession after a lapse of time. What a man is not possessed of, that is not his own, even though there be written proof, and even though witnesses be living; this is especially the case with immovables." But in the next verse he shows that he is speaking of what we would call the law of limitations, as he fixes periods after which possession shall destroy the right to recover; and further on he says, "Where possession exists, but no title whatever exists, there a title but not possession (alone) can confer proprietary rights. A title having been substantiated the possession becomes valid; it remains invalid without a proved title." He winds up by saying, "In all business transactions the latest act shall prevail; but in the case of a gift, a pledge, or a purchase the prior act has the greater force" (g). The whole subject is examined by Vijñaneśwara in chap. iii., sect. 6, "*Of a title without possession*," where he treats possession as merely matter of evidence, which is conclusive when it extends beyond the memory of man, or three generations, inconclusive in all other cases. He quotes a text which states that without some little possession the gift, sale or other transfer is not complete, and then proceeds: "A title, therefore, without corporeal acceptance, consisting of the enjoyment of the produce, is weaker than a title accompanied by it, or with such corporeal acceptance. But such is the case only, when of these two the priority is undistinguishable; but when it is ascertained which is first in point of date, and which posterior, then the simple prior title affords the stronger evidence" (h). These texts and many others are reviewed by Professor Wilson, in an article on Sir F. MacNaghten's Considerations on Hindu Law, and

(g) Nârada, iv. § 2—13. See also § 17—23, § 27.

(h) 1 W. MacN. 218; and see the whole section.

this article with further texts was examined by the Madras High Court in reference to a question of inchoate partition. Dr. Wilson states his view as follows, "It is therefore in our estimation quite clear that the Hindu law and common sense go hand in hand. A man may forego his rights if he pleases, and any capricious abandonment of them for an unreasonable time is to be punished by their forfeiture. But he is not to be deprived of what is legally his, because legal proceedings, interested opposition, accident, distance or disease debar him from taking possession of it when it first becomes his due." To which the Madras High Court adds, "This seems to us precisely the doctrine derivable from the text writers" (i).

§ 333. There is no lack of direct authority upon this point also, though the decisions are certainly not harmonious. Of course all the cases cited in § 331, which asserted the validity of a sale by a person out of possession, would apply *à fortiori* in favour of a sale by a person in possession without delivery to his vendee, though of course equities might arise in favour of a subsequent purchaser without notice (k). The case of mortgages also seems to stand on a different ground, and will be discussed separately. In Madras it has been frequently decided that a sale by the owner without delivery of possession is valid as against a subsequent sale by the original owner followed by possession, and that the first vendee may bring ejectment both against the vendor and the second vendee; "on the simple principle, that after the conveyance to the first vendee the owner of the land had nothing whatever to convey" (l). The same point was decided in Bengal by the Sudder Court before the Privy Council cases, and by the High Court after an examination of them (m); and also by the High Court of Bom-

Decisions.

Cases of sale.

(i) Wilson, Works, v. 88; *Lakshmy v. Narasimha*, 3 Mad. H. C. 40, 46, affirmed 13 M. I. A. 113.

(k) See *Ramcoomar v. McQueen* in the Privy Council, 11 B. L. R. 46.

(l) *Velayuda v. Sivarama*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 277; *Virabhadra v. Hari Rama*, 3 Mad. H. C. 38. So Nārada says, "What a man possesses without a title he must not alienate," iv. § 17. The same point has been repeatedly decided by the High Court in unreported cases, of which I have notes in MS.

(m) *Surbonarain v. Maharaj Singh*, S. D. of 1858, 601; *Gungahurry v. Raghubhram*, 14 B. L. R. 307. The cases in 22 W. R. 22, 200, and 25 W. R. 104, were transfers of a mere right of occupancy.

bay (n). On the other hand, in a more recent case the Court appears to have laid it down that a sale would be invalid without delivery of possession as well as transfer of title (o). The whole law upon the subject was subsequently reviewed by the same Court in a case where the owner of land had sold it by deed of sale to a party who paid a portion of the price, and on the same day sold it by a second deed to another party who paid the whole price and was put into possession. The suit was brought by the first vendee against the vendor and the second vendee. After an elaborate examination of the Native and English authorities, the High Court decided in favour of the defendant, on the broad ground that the sale without possession was invalid as against a subsequent purchaser without notice of it (p).

Cases of mortgage.

§ 334. The case of mortgages creates greater difficulty, as the mortgagor still retains an assignable interest in himself. Distinctions would also arise according as the mortgagor had transferred his property in the land, reserving only a right to redeem, or had retained the property, merely creating a lien upon it in favour of the creditor; in the language of English law, according as the mortgage was legal or equitable. Questions of notice, negligence, &c., would also largely affect the decision of each case. I do not propose to enter into these matters, which are beyond the scope of this work, and have been fully treated by Mr. Macpherson in his book on Mortgages. I shall briefly point out the state of the authorities on the one point of possession. It is evident that the effect of want of possession will depend largely upon whether such non-possession was in accordance with the terms of the contract, or opposed to it. Nārada says broadly, "Pledges are declared to be of two sorts, movable and immovable. Both are valid when there is actual enjoyment, and not otherwise" (q). It is possible

(n) *Nagoobae v. Moteegeer*, 1 Bomb. 5; *Bhookun v. Bhaeejee*, ib. 19; *Girdhar v. Daji*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 4.

(o) *Kachu v. Kachoba*, 10 Bomb. 491, and per *West, J.*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 93, citing 1 Stra. H. L. 32. The opinion of Mr. Colebrooke (2 Stra. H. L. 427) relied on by Sir Thos. Strange in support of this view, referred to a gift. The text of Yājñavalkya is probably the one cited by Wilson, *ub. sup.*

(p) *Lalabhai v. Bhai Amrit*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 299.

(q) Nārada, iv. § 64.

he may be referring to cases in which possession ought to follow the pledge, as it would do naturally in regard to movables. In Madras it is quite settled that a mere hypothecation of land, neither followed nor intended to be followed by possession, creates a lien upon it, which may be enforced against a subsequent purchaser (*r*). The same point has been decided in Bengal by the Supreme Court, after taking the opinion of the Judges of the Sudder Court (*s*). In Bombay there is rather an apparent than a real conflict of authority. It has been ruled by the Sudder Court in several early cases, that where there are two mortgages of the same property, the later, if followed by possession, takes priority over a former one without possession (*t*). In very recent times the same doctrine has been applied by the High Court to mortgages in the Konkan and the Deccan, apparently upon some special usage prevailing in these parts. But they hold that the mortgage without possession is not in itself invalid, and that registration will cure the defect, so as to give it priority over a later document with possession (*u*). The general principle that possession is not necessary to give validity to a mortgage as against the mortgagee was affirmed by the same Court in a very elaborate judgment, where all the previous cases were reviewed (*v*); and it has also been held that such a mortgagee may maintain his claim against third persons who are wrongfully in possession (*x*), or against purchasers at a Court sale, who only take the right, title and interest of the debtor (*y*), or against a purchaser by private contract who has had notice of the previous mortgage (*z*). Practically, therefore, there is no real difference between the law of

Mortgage without possession.

(*r*) *V. Seth Sam v. Luckpathy*, 9 M. I. A. 303; *Kadarsa v. Raviah*, 2 Mad. H. C. 103; *Golla Chinna v. Kali Appiah*, 4 Mad. H. C. 434; *Sadagopah v. Ruthna Mudali*, 6 Mad. Jur. 175.

(*s*) *Callydoss v. Sibchunder*, Morton. 111; *Sibchunder v. Russick Chunder*, Fulton, 36. These cases overrule contrary decisions in *Montrieu*, 278, and *Morton*, 105.

(*t*) *Tooljaram v. Meean Moohummed*, 2 Bor. 130; *Kundoojee v. Ballajee*, Bellasis, 5; *Dondee v. Suntram*, Morris, 56.

(*u*) *Gopal v. Krishnappa*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 60; *Hari Ramchandra v. Mahadaji*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 50; *Balaji v. Ramchandra*, 11 Bomb. 37.

(*v*) *Jivandas v. Framji*, 7 Bomb. O. C. 45.

(*x*) *Krishnaji v. Govind*, 9 Bomb. 275.

(*y*) *Chintaman v. Shivram*, 9 Bomb. 304.

(*z*) *Jiwa v. Mobut*, Morris, Pt. II. 117.

Bombay and the other Presidencies, except as to the usage of the Konkan and the Deccan.

Form of transfer.

§ 335. Writing is not necessary, under Hindu law, to the validity of any transaction whatever (a). Nor is there any distinction between movable and immovable property as to the mode of granting it (b). Nor are any technical words necessary, provided the intention of the grantor can be made out. Hence an estate of inheritance will be conferred by words which imperfectly describe such an estate, if an intention to create such an estate appears, and if an estate is given to a man simply without express words of inheritance, it would, in the absence of a conflicting context, carry by Hindu law an estate of inheritance (c). So the grant of an estate to a man and his children and grandchildren, or to a woman and the generations born of her womb, have been held to confer an absolute estate (d). But such an intention would be negatived when the grantor himself had only a limited estate, and it appeared that the grant was intended to endure so long as that interest lasted, but no longer (e). Or where from the nature of the thing conveyed, an intention to grant only for the life of the grantee ought to be presumed, as in the case of a jaghire (f), or an office (g), or a gift for maintenance (h). Of course where writing is used, it will be necessary to keep in view the provisions of the Stamp and Registration Acts.

(a) *Strinavasammal v. Vijayammal*, 2 Mad. H. C. 37; *Krishna v. Rayappa*, 4 Mad. H. C. 98; *per curiam*, 7 Bomb. O. C. 51; *Mt. Rookho v. Madho Das*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 59; *Hurpershad v. Sheo Dhyal*, 3 I. A. 259.

(b) *Per Peel, C. J.*, 6 M. I. A. 278.

(c) *Per Willes, J.*, *Tagore v. Tagore*, 9 B. L. R. 395; see however *Lekhraj Roy v. Kunhya Singh*, (P. C.) 3 Calc. 210.

(d) *Bhoobun Mohini v. Hurrish Chunder*, 5 I. A. 138.

(e) *Lekhraj Roy v. Kunhya Singh* (P. C.) 3 Calc. 210.

(f) *Gulabdas v. Collector of Surat*, 6 I. A. 54.

(g) *Dandsha v. Ismalsha*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 72.

(h) See *post* §

CHAPTER XI.

WILLS.

§ 336. THE origin and growth of the testamentary power among Hindus has always been a perplexity to lawyers. It is admitted that the idea of a will is wholly unknown to Hindu law, and that the native languages do not even possess a word to express the idea (*a*). In early times, when the family property was vested in the family corporation, and when the members had nothing more than a right of usufruct, the idea that any individual could exercise a power of disposal to commence after his own death, would have been a contradiction in terms. Even in later times, when a greater freedom of disposition had arisen, the principle that a gift could only take effect by possession, would seem to oppose an absolute bar to devises. Yet there can be no doubt that from the earliest period of our acquaintance with India we find traces of a struggling towards the testamentary power, often checked, but constantly renewed. It has been common to ascribe this to the influence of English lawyers in the Supreme Courts; but this explanation seems to me untenable. It is very probable that in the Presidency Towns, the example of Englishmen making wills, may have stimulated the natives in the same direction, but the King's Judges appear to have been quite neutral in the matter. They were conscious of their ignorance of native law, and anxiously sought the advice of their own pandits (§ 38), and of the Judges of the Company's Courts, and others who were experts in the unknown science. So far were they from grasping at jurisdiction, that they absolutely disclaimed it. In 1776 the Supreme Court of Calcutta, after taking time to consider,

Wills unknown
to Hindu Law.

(*a*) 2 Dig. 516, n. ; 2 Stra. H. L. 418, 420, 431.

Early instances
in Supreme
Courts.

granted administration to the goods of a Hindu, but on the terms that the administrator should administer according to Hindu law. In 1791 they reconsidered the matter, and decided that probate of the will, or administration of the goods of a Hindu or Muhammedan, could not be granted. It was not till July 1832 that a contrary rule was laid down, and from that date the practice of granting probate and administration to the property of natives was fully established (b). A similar alteration of practice is recorded by Sir Thomas Strange as having taken place at Madras (c). The earliest known will of a native is that of the celebrated Omichund. It is dated 1758, a time when the English arms were more in the ascendant than the English Courts (d).

Origin of wills
in religious
influence.

§ 337. It seems to me that the true origin of the testamentary power is to be sought for in that Brâhmanical influence, whose working I have already traced in the law of partition and alienation (e). It displayed itself especially in the sanctity attributed to religious gifts, that is gifts to religious men, or Brâhmanas. These were considered valid where even transfers for value would have been set aside. In other countries gifts try to clothe themselves with the semblance of a sale. Under Hindu law, sales looked for protection by assuming the appearance of a gift (f). It is obvious that a man is never more disposed to pious generosity than in his last days, when the approach of death furnishes him with the strongest motives for investing in the next world that wealth which he can no longer enjoy in the present. The acuteness of the Brâhman would have readily discovered and utilised this fact. Nothing is more remarkable in the earliest Bengal wills than the enormous amounts which they bestow for religious purposes. The same thing was remarked by Sir Thomas Strange in all the

(b) *Re Commula*, Morton, 1; *Goods of Hadjee Mustapha*, ib. 74; *Goods of Beebee Muttra*, ib. 75.

(c) 1 Stra. H. L. 267.

(d) This will was discussed in a case which came before the Supreme Court of Calcutta in 1793. See Montrion, 321; *per Phear*, J., 4 B. L. R., O. C. 138; Beng. Reg. II and XXXVI of 1793, cited by *Macpherson*, J., 4 B. L. R., O. C. 288; *per Norman*, J., 4 B. L. R., O. C. 217.

(e) *Ante*, §§ 216, 234, 235. See particularly the passage from Sir H. S. Maine, cited § 234.

(f) See *Mitâksharâ*, i. 1, § 32.

wills made by Hindus in Madras, and he observes somewhat cynically, that "the proportion is commonly in the ratio of the iniquity with which the property has been acquired, or of the sensuality and corruption to which it has been devoted" (g). It is probable that such bequests would often take the form of a *donatio mortis causâ*, revocable if the grantor survived, or that they were effected by death-bed dispositions, followed up by immediate delivery of possession. But there are texts of the Hindu sages which contain the actual germ of a will, and which were capable of being developed into a complete testamentary system. *Kâtyâyana* says, "What a man has promised in health or in sickness, for a religious purpose, must be given; and if he die without giving it, his son shall doubtless be compelled to deliver it." And again, "After delivering what is due as a friendly gift (promised by the father), let the remainder be divided among the heirs." And so *Hârîta* says: "A promise made in words, but not performed in deed, is a debt of conscience both in this world and the next" (h). Such promises, being treated as debts, would be enforced against the heir in exactly the same manner as an ordinary secular debt. At first they would be treated as a moral obligation, and then, by analogy, as a legal obligation. It is significant that the principle seems first to have been applied in favour of pious gifts. But it would rapidly extend to all dispositions of property, to the extent of a man's power of disposing of it. In case of separate and self-acquired property the right would naturally be admitted with little hesitation. It would afterwards be applied to the undivided share of a co-heir, or to ancestral property in the hands of a father or sole owner. In each province the rapidity and extent of the growth of the testamentary power would depend upon the degree to which the control of the testator over his property was admitted. This is exactly what took place.

Early history of wills.

§ 338. The law of devise was, as might be expected, first

(g) 2 Stra. H. L. 453.

(h) 2 Dig. 96; 3 Dig. 388; 2 Dig. 171. The only writer, as far as I know, who has remarked the bearing of these texts upon the present question is M. Gibelin. See a very interesting discussion (Vol. ii. Titre. vii), in which he points out that the Hindu will was a native and not an European invention.

Cases in Bengal: settled in Bengal, where the power of alienation was most widely extended. The reported cases commence in 1786, and the first two related to divided and self-acquired property, as to which, after reference to the Pandits, the wills were maintained (*i*). In 1792 the Nuddea case, which has already been stated (§ 326), was decided in the Sudder Court, and it was followed next year in the Supreme Court by the case of *Dialchund v. Kissory Dossee* (*k*), where the property appears to have been self-acquired. In both these cases the Pandits affirmed the right of a father to devise property, whether ancestral or self-acquired, and the former of the two is stated by Mr. Colebrooke to have been accepted as establishing the point. Mr. Sutherland, however, to whom the latter case was referred for his opinion, stated that the will would be only valid as against sons, "provided no part of the property conferred by it were real ancestral property" (*l*). This view was evidently not taken by the profession, for in 1800 a most important case arising out of the *Rajah Nobkissen's* will was litigated in the Supreme Court, where the Rajah, who had a natural-born and an adopted son, bequeathed an ancestral taluq to his adopted son, and the four brothers of such son, thereby depriving his natural son of all interest in the taluq, and his adopted son of four-fifths of his interest. The validity of the will was admitted without dispute, though the adoption was contested (*m*). In 1808 the will of *Nemychurn Mullick* was contested in the Supreme Court, and the decree declared "that by the Hindu law Nemychurn Mullick might and could dispose by will of all his property, as well movable as immovable, and as well ancestral as otherwise." This case went on appeal upon another point to the Privy Council, but the finding as to the validity of the will was never disputed (*n*). Accordingly the will of a brother of Nemychurn, who died possessed of great wealth, ancestral and

(*i*) *Munnoo Lall v. Gopee Dutt*, Montr. 290; *Russick Lall v. Choitun Churn*, ib. 304; 2 M. Dig. 220.

(*k*) Montr. 371; F. MacN. 357.

(*l*) 2 Stra. H. L. 429. See Mr. Colebrooke's own opinions, 2 Stra. H. L. 431, 435, 437.

(*m*) *Gopee Mohun v. Rajkristna*, Montr. 381; F. MacN. 356.

(*n*) *Ramtonoo Mullick v. Ramgopal*, F. MacN. 336; 1 Kn. 245.

self-acquired, was never disputed, although by it he almost completely disinherited one of his sons (o). In 1812 the Sudder Pandits, when consulted as to the validity of an alleged devise by a widow, laid down the general principle, that "the same rule applies to bequests as to gifts; every person who has authority, while in health, to transfer property to another, possesses the same authority of bequeathing it (p)." Finally, after the period of doubt caused by the decision in *Bhowanny Churn's* case, the matter was set at rest for ever, as far as Bengal is concerned, by the certificate of the Sudder Court in 1831, which has already been set out (§ 326). It is now beyond dispute that in Bengal a father, as regards all his property, and a co-heir, as regards his share, may dispose of it by will as he likes, whatever may be its nature (q).

Their validity
established in
Bengal.

§ 338A. A minor has been held in Bengal to be incapable of making a will (r). A married woman may make a will of her *strīdhana* or any other property which is absolutely at her own disposal. But she cannot devise property inherited from males, since her interest in it ceases at her death (s). The same decision would no doubt be given on both points in all the Provinces of India.

Minor.

Married woman.

§ 339. In Southern India wills had a much more chequered career, as might be anticipated from the stricter views entertained as to the family union. During the time Sir Thomas Strange was on the Bench no question as to wills arose in such a form as to require a decision. He evidently considered them a mere innovation, though after consultation with Mr. Colebrooke he was disposed to think that they might be allowed to the same extent to which a gift *inter vivos* would have been valid (t). He cites several futwahs of Madras pandits in which they seem to take the same view. These are all commented upon by Mr. Ellis, whose

Wills in
Southern India.

(o) F. MacN. 350.

(p) *Sreenarain v. Bhya Jha*, 2 S. D. 23 (29, 37).

(q) *Per Ld. Kingsdown*, 6 M. I. A. 344; *per Peacock*, C. J., 4 B. L. R., O. C. 159; *per Willes*, J., 9 B. L. R. 396.

(r) *Cossinauth Bysack v. Hurrooondery*, F. MacN. 81; 2 M. Dig. 198, note.

(s) *Teencowrie v. Dinonath*, 3 W. R. 49; *Choonee Lall v. Jussoo Mull*, 1 Bor. 55; *Dhoolubh v. Jeevee*, ib. 67; *Mt. Umroot v. Kulyandas*, ib. 284.

(t) *Veerapermall v. Narrain*, 1 N. C. 91; 1 Stra. H. L. 267.

Early instances
doubtful.

authority on Madras law and usage ranked very high. He asserted with confidence that no Hindu could make a will which would turn his property after his death into a different course from that which it would have taken by Hindu law. He intimated a very strong doubt whether the Pandits understood what was meant when they were questioned as to the operation of a will (*u*). It is quite certain that in the case which ultimately settled the law, they thought they were being consulted as to the effect of a gift (*x*). The course of decisions in Madras for many years was certainly in accordance with his view. The only case litigated in the Supreme Court was one where a testator had bequeathed part of his self-acquired property for the performance of religious ceremonies (*y*). This would clearly have been valid under the text of Kátyâyana already cited (§ 337). In the Sudder Court, however, there were numerous decisions. The first was in 1817, but as the devise was in favour of an adopted son, the first question was as to the validity of the adoption, and as its validity was established, that of the will never arose (*z*). The next cases arose in 1824 and 1828, and gave rise to much litigation, extending ultimately to the Privy Council. In these a widow sued to set aside two alienations made by her deceased husband to distant relations of property, which would have otherwise come to her as his heir. In the first case the document is spoken of as a will, but was in terms a deed of gift, and recited that possession had been given. This, however, appears not to have been done. The decision was in favour of the widow, but upon the ground that upon the proper construction of the will the devisee only took as manager for the heir, and was now dead. In their judgment the Court stated as their opinion "that under the Hindu law a man is authorised to dispose of his property by will, which under the same law he could have alienated during his survivorship by any other instrument" (*a*). This, of course,

*Dictum of
Sudder Court.*

(*u*) 2 Stra. H. L. 217—228.

(*x*) See *post*, § 341. It must be remembered that the pandits did not speak English, and that their language contained no equivalent for will.

(*y*) *Narrainsawmy v. Arnachella*, 1 Stra. H. L. 268, note; 1 Mad. H. C. 336.

(*z*) *Arnachellum v. Iyahsawmy*, 1 Mad. Dec. 154.

(*a*) *Mulraz Venkata v. M. Luttmiah*, 1 Mad. Dec. 438, 440.

was purely *obiter dictum*. In the second case, possession under the gift was established. The property was self-acquired, and the question was correctly put to the pandits, whether a gift of self-acquired property made by a man without male issue was valid as against a widow, who was left an heir to other property to a large extent. The pandits answered that the gift was valid, and the Court so decided. This case was confirmed by the Privy Council. There, too, though the document is spoken of as a will, the transaction is treated as an alienation, and its validity is rested on the opinion of the Hindu law officers, who had dealt with it purely as such (b). In an intermediate case the question was whether a will would be valid if it left the whole of a partible zemindary to one of two sons. The Court decided that the document really left it to the two sons as joint heirs. But they said, "The Court have repeatedly decided that the will of a Hindu is of no validity or effect whatever, except so far as it may be consistent with Hindu law (c)." Later still the same Court treated a will, by which a grandfather was asserted to have left landed property to his wife to the prejudice of his sons, as being absolutely invalid as against their sons, *i.e.*, his own grandsons (d).

Early instances doubtful.

§ 340. So far there really had been no actual decisions, but the tendency of the Sudder Judges had certainly been to accept the opinions of Sir Thomas Strange, Mr. Colebrooke, and the pandits, that the legality of a will must be tried by the same tests as that of a gift; for instance, that it would be valid if made to the prejudice of a widow, invalid if made to the prejudice of male issue. At this time Madras Reg. V. of 1829 was passed. It recited that wills were instruments unknown, and had been made so as to be totally repugnant, to the authorities prevailing in Madras; it then repealed a former regulation which had authorised the executors of the will of a Hindu to take charge of his property, and enacted that for the future Hindu wills should have no legal force whatever, except so far as they were in

Tendency of opinion.

Reg. V. of 1829.

(b) *Mulraz v. Chelakany*, 2 Mad. Dec. 12, affirmed 2 M. I. A. 54.

(c) *Sooranany v. Sooranany*, 1 Mad. Dec. 495.

(d) *Yejnamearty v. Chavalay*, 2 Mad. Dec. 16.

Validity of wills
denied.

conformity with Hindu law, according to authorities prevalent in the Madras Presidency. This regulation appears to have induced the Judges to regard wills as being wholly inoperative. Wills were not only set aside where they prejudiced the issue, as by an unequal distribution of ancestral property between the sons (e); but the Court also laid down that where a man without issue bequeathed his property away from his widow and daughters, such a will would be absolutely illegal and void, unless they had assented to it (f). These decisions would appear to have put wills completely out of Court. But in the very next year a case was decided which ultimately proved to be the commencement of a complete revolution on the point. The circumstances attending it were so singular as to merit a little detail.

Current
reversed.

§ 341. The suit was by a widow to recover her husband's estate, which consisted in part of ancestral immovable property. The defendants set up a will executed by the deceased, by which he constituted them executors and managers of his estate, and, after providing for his wife and daughters, left the rest of his property to religious and charitable uses, with a proviso that if his wife, then pregnant, bore a son, the estate should revert to him on his coming of age. The will was found to be genuine, but the widow set up an authority to adopt a son in the event of a daughter being born. The Civil Judge consulted the Sudder Pandits, and asked whether the will was valid, and if so, whether it would be invalidated by the authority to adopt, if actually given. The Pandits answered, "The will referred to in the question is valid under the Hindu law, the testator having thereby bequeathed a portion of his estate for the maintenance of his wife, and other members of his family, whom he was bound to protect, and directed the remainder to be appropriated to charitable purposes in the event of his wife, who was then pregnant, not being delivered of a son. If the testator had really given his wife verbal instructions to adopt a son in the event of her not

(e) *Moottoovengada v. Toombayasawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 27.

(f) *Tullapragada v. Crovedy*, 2 Mad. Dec. 79; *Sevacamy v. Vaneyammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1850, 50.

bearing male issue, her compliance with those instructions would of course invalidate the will according to the Hindu law, it being incompetent for the testator who authorised the adoption of a son to alienate the whole of his estate, and thereby injure the means of the maintenance of his would-be heir." The Civil Judge found against the alleged authority to adopt, and decided in favour of the will. His decision was given in 1849, before the decision of the Sudder Court last quoted. In appeal to the Sudder Udalt, the widow urged that under Reg. V of 1829 the will was void. The case was heard by a single Judge, who affirmed the decree of the Lower Court. In regard to the validity of the will, he said, "The third objection taken by the appellant is that the will is illegal, because the widow is the party to whom the law gives the estate. The Court have referred to all the authorities quoted by the appellant in support of this position, and find that although the opinions regarding wills of Hindus generally are conflicting, yet that the majority of them are against the argument of the appellant. It is unnecessary to cite all the opinions given on the subject, and the Court will content itself with referring to the case of *Ramtonoo Mullick v. Ramgopal Mullick* (Morl. Dig., p. 39, Nos. 3 & 4), in which it was held that a Hindu might, and could, dispose by will of all his property, movable and immovable, and as well ancestral as otherwise, and this decision was affirmed on appeal by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Questions, however, regarding the legality of the will now under discussion were referred to the law officers of the Court, to whom the legislature have assigned the duty of declaring the law on such matters, and they distinctly stated their opinion, that it is a valid and good instrument. The arguments, therefore, of the appellant that it is not recognizable under the provisions of Reg. V of 1829, cannot be sustained" (g).

Nagalutchmy v. Nadaraja.

Upon this decision Mr. Strange, lately a Judge of the Madras Sudder and High Courts, remarks (h), "This decision was passed by a single Judge, confessedly ignorant

Criticised by
Mr. Strange.

(g) *Nagalutchmy v. Nadaraja*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 226.

(h) *Str. Man.* § 176.

of the law. He sought to guide himself by authorities, but found them conflicting. Supporting himself by the opinion of the Pandits, and a judgment by the Calcutta Supreme Court, affirmed by the Privy Council, he upheld the will then in issue, which appointed trustees to the testator's property, to the prejudice of his widow. The Pandits then applied to are the same who have since declared that no Hindu can make a will, and they explain that they gave the opinion rested on in the above case under the idea that they were called upon to test the will by the power the testator had to deal with the property during his lifetime, in the manner he had done by will." Certainly no particular authority can be allowed to the decision of the Sudder Court. It is impossible to imagine where the learned Judge could have found the conflicting decisions he referred to, unless among the Bengal reports, and the case of *Ramtonoo Mullick v. Ramgopal* was of course upon this point of no authority whatever in Madras. The only Madras authority he could have found was the *dictum* in 1 Mad. Dec. 449, which laid down the broad principle that whatever a man may do by act *inter vivos*, he may do by will. Probably this principle accounts for the mode in which the question appears to have been put to the Pandits, and for their misapprehension as to the point on which their opinion was required. That there must have been some misapprehension appears, not only from Mr. Strange's statement, made after personal consultation with them, but from a subsequent *futwah* of theirs, in which the very distinction is taken between a gift and a will. In 1852 they pronounced that "A man may in his lifetime alienate his property to the prejudice of his widow, leaving her the means of maintenance; but he cannot make arrangements that such arrangement shall take place after his death, since his widow would be entitled to what he died possessed of (i)."

Founded on
mistake of
Pandits.

Confirmed on
appeal.

§ 342. However, the case went, on appeal, to the Privy Council, and was there affirmed. Their Lordships said (k), "It may be allowed that in the ancient Hindu law, as it was

(i) Sudder Pandits, 19th July, 1852; Stra. Man. § 178.

(k) 6 M. I. A. 309, 344. See too per *Ld. Kingsdown*, 10 M. I. A. 308.

understood through the whole of Hindustan, testamentary instruments, in the sense affixed by English lawyers to that expression, were unknown; and it is stated by a writer of authority (Sir Thomas Strange) that the Hindu language has no term to express what we mean by a will. But it does not necessarily follow that what in effect, though not in form, are testamentary instruments, which are only to come into operation, and affect property, after the death of the maker of the instrument, were equally unknown. However this may be, the strictness of the ancient law has long since been relaxed, and throughout Bengal a man who is the absolute owner of property may now dispose of it by will as he pleases, whether it be ancestral or not. This point was resolved several years ago by the concurrence of all the judicial authorities in Calcutta, as well of the Supreme as of the Sudder Court (l). No doubt the law of Madras differs in some respects, and amongst others with respect to wills, from that of Bengal. But even in Madras it is settled that a will of property, not ancestral, may be good. A decision to this effect has been recognized and acted upon by the Judicial Committee (m), and, indeed, the rule of law to that extent is not disputed in this case. If, then, the will does not affect ancestral property, it must be, not because an owner of property by the Madras law cannot make a will, but because, by some peculiarity of ancestral property, it is withdrawn from the testamentary power. It was very ingeniously argued by the respondent's counsel, that in all cases where a man is able to dispose of his property by act *inter vivos*, he may do so by will; that he cannot do so when he has a son, because the son, immediately on his birth, becomes coparcener with his father; that the objection to bequeathing ancestral property is founded on the Hindu notion of an undivided family; but that where there are no males in the family the liberty of bequeathing is unlimited. ✓

Privy Council
decision.

(l) This evidently refers to the certificate of the Sudder Judges to the Supreme Court in 1831. See *ante*, § 326.

(m) See the case of *Mulraz v. Chalekany*, 2 M. I. A. 54, and the two cases in the Sudder Court, 1 Mad. Dec. 438, and 2 Mad. Dec. 12, *ante*, § 339, where it is shown that both were cases of gift; the one which was affirmed in the P. C. having undoubtedly been followed by possession given to the donee in the life of the donor.

It is not necessary for their Lordships to lay down so broad a proposition, as they think it safer to confine themselves to the particular case before them. Under the circumstances of testator's family when he made his will and codicil, and having regard to the instruments themselves, the Pandits to whom this question was properly referred by the Court—the Pandits of the Sudder Dewanny Udaltut—have declared their opinion that these instruments are sufficient to dispose of ancestral estate; that opinion has been affirmed by two Judges successively, of whom it is but justice to say that they appear to have examined the subject very carefully, and after much consideration to have pronounced very satisfactory judgments, though in one or two incidental observations which have fallen from them their Lordships may not entirely concur.”

Change effected
by it.

§ 343. This decision undoubtedly gave a new direction to the law of Madras as regards wills. Being a decision of the Court of final appeal, it ought to have been impossible ever again to lay down the principle, that a will could have no operation, and must be treated as wholly invalid, if its directions were opposed to the rules of succession which would have prevailed in its absence. The decision no doubt was expressly based upon the opinion of the Pandits, and the judgments of two Judges. The former appears to have been founded on a misconception, and the latter upon the erroneous application of decisions given under one system of law, to a case which ought to have been governed by a wholly different system. But there can be little doubt that the decision was in unconscious conformity to the popular feeling, a feeling which aimed at increased liberty in regard to property, and which showed itself by attempts to alienate it in ways unknown to the law of the *Mitāksharâ*. In fact the people of Southern India were trying, perhaps without knowing what they did, to take upon themselves the powers which *Jímûta Vahâna* and his disciples had conferred upon the Hindus of Bengal. But beyond the fact that their Lordships, as it were, gave vitality to wills, the actual effect of the decision was very narrow. It carefully refrained from asserting that the power of bequest was co-extensive

with that of alienation *inter vivos*. It did lay down that a man, who had in other ways provided for his wife and daughters, might devise ancestral immovable property as he pleased to their prejudice. It seemed to assume that he could not do so as against male descendants. It neither affirmed nor denied the further doctrine of the Pandits that if he had given authority to adopt, his devise would be invalid as against a son adopted in pursuance of such authority (n).

§ 344. The decree of the Judicial Committee was pronounced in 1856, and in 1852 several decisions of the Madras Sudder Court are recorded, which seem to have been passed in perfect unconsciousness of their own decree in 1851. In the first case (o) a person who is described as the son of the cousin-german of the testator, sued to set aside a will by the deceased in favour of the foster son. The property in this case was certainly not ancestral. It had come to the testator from his brother, to whom it had been bequeathed by his maternal grandmother. He might therefore have disposed of it by gift at his pleasure (§ 298). The Sudder Pandits said, "As the Hindu law does not recognize a foster son, it was not legal that F. (the testator) should constitute H. (the special appellant) his foster son, and make a will accordingly, nor is it consistent with the Çâstra that H. should perform F.'s funeral rites. Such performance on his part is legally ineffectual, and cannot entitle him to the property of F., which must go to F.'s sapiṇḍa kinsmen, who are included in the order of succession to the property of a person who died leaving no male issue." The Sudder Court affirmed the correctness of this exposition, but dismissed the suit on the ground that the plaintiff was not the testator's heir. In 1855 and 1859 the Sudder Court again broadly laid down the rule that a will was of no effect unless it took effect by possession during the donor's lifetime; that as a mere will it created no title, and could not affect the inheritance (p). In

Later decisions.

Sudder Court
refuse to act on
Privy Council
decision.

(n) See F. MacN. 151, 228; *Durma Samoodhany v. Coomara Venkatachella*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, p. 111.

(o) *Samy Josyen v. Ramien*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, p. 60.

(p) *Strat. Man.* § 177; Mad. Dec. of 1859, 35, 247. See too Mad. Dec. of 1860, 115.

1861 there were three cases, in all of which the wills were set aside as being opposed to Hindu law. In two of these cases the will was made to the prejudice of the testator's widow, as in the Privy Council case. The latest case is said to have been exactly similar to that of *Nagalutchmy v. Nadaraja*; but the Sudder Court refused to be bound by that decision, holding that it had been based upon an opinion of the pandits, which was given under a misapprehension, and which the law officers had afterwards retracted (q).

Harmony
restored by

High Court
decision.

§ 345. In 1862 the High Court was constituted in Madras, and the question shortly came again before a tribunal which was more willing to be bound by the decisions of the Privy Council than its predecessor. Here the testator, who had no male issue, had bequeathed the bulk of his property, movable and immovable, to a distant relation, allotting what was admitted to be a sufficient maintenance to his legal representative, his widow. No possession had been given, and confessedly the disposition could only operate as a will. There was no finding whether the property was ancestral or self-acquired, but the Chief Justice said it must be assumed to be the former. The Court reviewed all the previous decisions, and affirmed the will. They said, "It is not necessary for us here to consider and lay down any general rule as to how far, or under what circumstances the law gives to a Hindu the power of disposal by will. But we may observe, that now that the legal right to make a will is settled, there seems nothing in principle or reason opposed to the exercise of the power being allowed co-extensively (as stated in some of the cases, and forcibly urged in *Nagalutchmy v. Nadaraja*) with the independent right of gift or other disposal by act *inter vivos*, which by law or established usage, or custom having the force of law, a native now possesses in Madras. To this extent the power of disposition can reasonably be considered to be in conformity with the respective proprietary rights of the possessor of property, and of heirs and coparceners, as provided and secured by

(q) *Muttu v. Annavaiyangar*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 67; *Virakumara v. Gopal*, ib. 147; 1 Mad. H. C. 333, note.

the provisions of Hindu law" (r). This decision of course put an end to all discussion as to the capacity of a testator in Madras to make a binding will. The extent of that capacity will be considered further on (§ 347).

§ 346. The same silent revolution appears to have taken place in the Bombay Presidency. In a very early case in which the pandits were consulted they said, "There is no mention of wills in our Çâstras, and therefore they ought not to be made;" and proceeded to point out that the owner of property could only dispose of it in a manner, and to the persons, directed by law (s). Accordingly the Çâstris declared wills to be invalid by which a man devised property away from his wife and daughters, though he provided for their maintenance, putting it on the general principle that the wife was heir, and therefore the will was ineffectual (t). And similarly where the will was in favour of one of two sisters' sons, to the exclusion of a third sister, and the second son of the second sister (u). In all these cases, it will be observed, a gift would have been perfectly valid. These decisions ranged from 1806 to 1820. When the current changed I am unable to state, but in 1866 Westropp, J., said, "In the Supreme Court the wills of Hindus have been always recognized, and also in the High Court, at the original side. Whatever questions there may formerly have been as to the right of a Hindu to make a will relating to his property in the Mofussil, or as to the recognition of wills by the Hindu law, there can be no doubt that testamentary writings are, as returns made within the last few years from the Zillahs show, made in all parts of the Mofussil of this Presidency; but, as might have been expected, much more frequently in some districts than in others, and this Court at its appellate side, has, on several occasions, recognized and acted on such documents (x)."

Wills originally
not recognized
in Bombay.

Validity of wills
in Bombay.

(r) *Vallinayagam v. Pachche*, 1 Mad. H. C. 326, 339; *Ashutosh Dutt v. Doorga Churn Chatterjee*, L. R., 6 I. A. 182.

(s) 2 Stra. H. L. 449.

(t) *Deo Baee v. Wan Baee*, 1 Bor. 27; *Mt. Goolab v. Mt. Phool*, ib. 154; *Gungaram v. Tappee*, ib. 372.

(u) *Ichharam v. Prumanund*, 2 Bor. 471. Other cases where the persons disinherited may possibly have been coparceners will be found in 1 Bor. 380; 2 Bor. 6 and 124.

(x) *Narottam Jagjivan v. Narsandás Háríkísandás*, 3 Bomb. A. C. S.

Whether power
of devise same as
that of gift.

Devise invalid as
against rights of
survivors.

§ 347. The extent of the testamentary power may, in some respects, be still open to discussion. The principle which has been frequently suggested, though never expressly laid down, that the power of devise was co-extensive with that of alienation *inter vivos*, is apparently adopted by the High Court of Bombay in the case of *Narottam Jagjivan v. Narsandás Háríkisisandás* (y), where they held that a man who had property not shown to be self-acquired, might make a valid will as against a remote kinsman, who, though his heir, was not his coparcener. They held that he must have the same power over separate property as over self-acquired, and that as he could have given away the property in question he could also bequeath it. In a later case, however, Mr. Justice Holloway denied the proposition. He said (z), "It may indeed be said that the power of devising has been introduced by analogy to the power of giving, but this by no means involves as a logical consequence, that a man may devise whatever he may give. This has never been decided, and it is sufficient in the present case to say that the legal anomaly, introduced by express decision, has never been pushed to this extent. If it were necessary to discuss the question it would not be difficult to show a most important distinction between giving and devising, and the impossibility of a devise fulfilling the requisites of the Hindu doctrine of gift." In a later case the same question arose, where the document could only operate as a will. There an adopted son sued to set aside a will by which his adoptive father, after the adoption, had bequeathed the whole of his ancestral immovable property to his daughters. The Lower Court held the will valid as to one moiety. The High Court, after a reference to a Full Bench, held it wholly invalid. They reconsidered the conflict of law between the Calcutta and Madras High Courts as to the right of one coparcener to alienate his own share, and adhered to their own view that he could do so, though he could not, before partition, convey away, as his interest, any specific

(y) 3 Bomb. A. C. 6, 10; *Lakshman Dada Naik v. Ramchandra*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561. The same rule appears to be laid down in the *Punjab*; *Punjab Customs*, 34, 68.

(z) 3 Mad. H. C. 55; acc. 4 Bomb. O. C. 158.

portion of the joint property. But they held that he could not do so by will. "At the moment of death the right by survivorship is in conflict with the right by devise. Then the title by survivorship, being the prior title, takes precedence to the exclusion of that by devise (a)." The principle of this decision was subsequently followed on the original side of the Court by Mr. Justice Holloway (b), who observed: "It is not law that all that a Hindu may dispose of *inter vivos* can be disposed of by a mortuary instrument. That has never been decided by the Court, but on the contrary, has been distinctly found against in a late case from Mangalore (c)." Of course this view would be followed by the Bengal Courts in deciding a case under Mitâksharâ law, since they do not admit the right of a father even by sale, still less by gift, to dispose of his own undivided share during his life, without the consent of his coparceners. ✓

§ 348. The same view is taken by the Bombay Courts. In the case of *Narottam Jagjivan v. Narsandâs Hârikisandâs* already quoted (d), the Court, after stating that the existence of the testamentary power must now be considered as beyond dispute, proceeded to say, "But the extent to which such testaments shall be permitted to take effect—the scope of the testamentary power of a Hindu—is quite another question. Even in the Supreme Court, where the right of a Hindu to make a will has been always recognized, I have never known it to be argued or held that his testamentary power is co-extensive with that of an Englishman. The will of a Hindu, it has been decided by the Privy Council, must be regulated by the Hindu law (f). It has been often ruled in the Supreme Court that he may dispose, by will, of property wholly acquired by his own exertions, and also of separate property acquired by partition of family property, or by the non-existence, or, if any did ever exist, the extinction of coparceners or joint tenants; and no distinction, of which I am aware, has ever been taken between it and self-acquired property, either in point of descent or of

In case of undivided property.

(a) *Vitla Butten v. Yamenamma*, 8 Mad. H. C. 6.

(b) *Goorova Butten v. Narrainsawmy Butten*, 8 Mad. H. C. 13.

(c) Namely the one last cited.

(d) 3 Bomb. A. C. 6.

(f) 8 M. I. A. 66.

alienability. On the other hand, it has been often held there, also, that he cannot dispose, by will, of undivided family property, or of any share therein, so long as that share remains unsevered from the family stock." And in another case (g) the Court said, "Upon the authorities we hold that on this side of India a member of an undivided Hindu family cannot, without the consent of his coparceners, make a gift of his share in the undivided property, or dispose of it by will."

Result of decisions.

§ 349. The result apparently would be, that the right of devise is co-extensive with that of alienation, except where, in an undivided family, the right of devise conflicts with the law of survivorship, in which case the former gives way. This view accords on the whole with that taken by the Privy Council in 1867 (h), when they said, "It is too late to contend that, because the ancient Hindu treatises make no mention of wills, a Hindu cannot make a testamentary disposition of his property. Decided cases, too numerous to be now questioned, have determined that the testamentary power exists, and may be exercised, at least within the limits which the law prescribes to alienation by gift *inter vivos*. Accordingly it has been settled that even in those parts of India which are governed by the stricter law of the Mitâksharâ, a Hindu without male descendants may dispose by will of his separate and self-acquired property, whether movable or immovable, and that one having male descendants may so dispose of self-acquired property, if movable, subject perhaps to the restriction that he cannot wholly disinherit any one of such descendants. It is however objected that a Hindu in those Provinces, who has sons, or other male descendants, must, on the application of the doctrine in question, be held to be incapable of making by will an unequal distribution amongst them of immovable property, whether ancestral or self-acquired, because by the law of the Mitâksharâ his sons in both cases take, on their birth, an interest in the property, which their father, without their consent, cannot displace. For the respondent it is contended that this question is concluded by

(g) *Gangabhai v. Ramanna*, 3 Bomb. A. C. 66; *Udaram Sitaram v. Ranu Panduji*, 11 Bomb. 76; *per Westropp*, C. J., 10 Bomb. 157.

(h) *Beer Pertab Sahee v. Maharajah Rajender Pertab*, 12 M. I. A. 1, 38.

the Bithoor case (2). It cannot be denied that in that case, Privy Council. the testator being a Mahratta, and domiciled at Cawnpore, and having real as well as personal estate, made by will an unequal distribution of both amongst his sons, and that his legal power to do so was affirmed by this Committee, and by both the Courts below. The appellant, however, insists that this decision is opposed to the law of the school of Benares, and relies on the texts of the Mitâksharâ, which show that a father cannot alienate his self-acquired estate, or make an unequal distribution of them by partition, without the consent of his sons; and also upon passages in Strange's Hindu Law, and other authorities. Mr. Leith, on the other hand, has argued that all these authorities are to be reconciled with the decision in the Bithoor case, by holding that they relate to property acquired by the father by the use or with the aid of ancestral estate, and that they have no application to separate or self-acquired property in the strict sense of the term." No decision was given upon the point, as the Committee held that in the case before them the question did not arise.

§ 350. So far we have been treating of the testators's power to devise, as it relates to the persons to whom he may devise, that is, his power to alter the order of succession as it would arise in the event of intestacy. But a completely different question arises as to his power to alter the nature of the estate which will vest in his devisee, that is, to create an estate of a different species from that which the law would give rise to. As to this, the rule is that, so far as he has the power of bequest at all, he may not only direct who shall take the estate, but may also direct what quantity of estate they shall take, both as regards the object matter to be taken, and the duration of time for which it is to be held, and he may also arrange, so that on the termination of an estate in one person, the estate shall pass over, wholly or in part, to another person. But this liberty is shackled by the condition that no one limitation, either as regards the person who is to take, or the estate that is to be taken, shall violate

Estate must be
one allowed by
Hindu Law.

(i) *Nana Nurain v. Huree Punth*, 9 M. I. A. 96. There the property bequeathed was self-acquired.

any of the fundamental principles of the Hindu law (*k*). Therefore the person who is to take must be capable of taking, and the estate which he is given must be an estate recognized by the Hindu law, and not encompassed with limitations or restrictions opposed to the nature of the estate given. And though trustees may be employed to facilitate a legal form of bequest, they cannot be made use of so as to carry out indirectly what the law does not allow to be done directly.

Shifting estate.

§ 351. The first point was laid down by implication in the case of *Sreemutty Soorjeemonee Dossee v. Denobundo Mullick* (*l*), and expressly in the case of *Tagore v. Tagore* (*m*). In the former case the testator, a Hindu resident in Calcutta, by the 5th clause of his will left his property to his five sons in such a manner as would, if there had been nothing more, have made them absolute owners. By the 11th clause he declared that if any of his five sons should die without male issue, his share should pass over to the sons then living or their sons, and that neither his widow nor his daughter, nor his daughter's son, should get any share out of his share. The event which he contemplated took place. One of the sons died, leaving no male issue. Under the law of Bengal the widow would inherit his share, and she claimed it, notwithstanding the will, on the ground that the bequest to the son was absolute, and the gift over invalid. The claim was rejected in the Supreme Court, and on appeal the Lord Justice Knight Bruce said (*n*), "Whatever may have formerly been considered the state of that law as to the testamentary power of Hindoos over their property, that power has now long been recognized, and must be considered as completely established. This being so, we are to say, whether there is anything against public convenience, anything generally mischievous, or anything against the general principles of Hindoo law, in allowing a testator to give property, whether by way of remainder, or by way of executory bequest upon an event which is to happen, if at all,

(*k*) See *per Turner*, L. J., 8 M. I. A. 85.

(*l*) 6 M. I. A. 526; 9 M. I. A. 123.

(*m*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 103; 9 B. L. R. 377.

(*n*) 9 M. I. A. 135.

immediately on the close of a life in being. Their Lordships think that there is not; that there would be great general inconvenience and public mischief in denying such power, and that it is their duty to advise Her Majesty that such a power does exist." The bequest above cited was in fact exactly the arrangement which the Mitāksharâ law would have made for the devolution of the testator's property. If the effect of his will had been permanently to impress upon his property, in the hands of all its successive holders, the law of inheritance prescribed by the Mitāksharâ in place of that of the Dâya Bhâga which governed the family, the will would undoubtedly have been invalid according to the doctrines laid down in the Tagore case. But the case which arose for decision was simply that of a gift to a person in existence, with a proviso that in a certain event the property should pass over to another person. This was the ordinary case of a gift made with a condition annexed fixing its duration (o). A bequest absolute in one event, for life in another.

Devise with gift over.

§ 352. The language of the Judicial Committee, however, which might be taken as laying down the general rule that an executory bequest would always be valid by Hindu law where it would be valid by the law of England, was much relied on in a subsequent case of great importance, where an attempt was made to push the right of bequest to an extent greater than would be allowed even in England. This was the case of *Jatindra Mohun Tajore v. Ganendra Mohun Tagore* (p). There the testator, who had property, ancestral and self-acquired, real and personal, producing an income of 2½ lacs, commenced his will by reciting that he had already provided for his only son, and that he was to take nothing whatever under his will. He then vested the whole of his estate in trustees with provisions for their number being constantly maintained. After providing for numerous legacies he proceeded to direct the course in which the *corpus* of the property should devolve. The key to this was to be found in

Executory bequest.

(o) See the case explained 4 B. L. R. O. C. 192, and 9 B. L. R. 399. See also *Mt. Bhoobun Moyee v. Ram Kishore Acharj*, 10 M. I. A. 279, 308, 311; *Bhoobun Mohini v. Hurrischunder*, 5 I. A. 138.

(p) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 103; 9 B. L. R. 377.

Tagore case.

his express wish that the bulk of the property should neither be diminished nor divided. To effect this he directed that the legacies and annuities should be paid gradually out of the income ; and while this process was going on, the trustees were to hold the property, paying only the balance of the yearly income to "the person entitled to the beneficial enjoyment of the real property." As soon as all charges upon the estate were paid off, the trustees were to convey the real estate to the use of the person who should, under the limitations of the will, be entitled to it, subject to the limitations therein expressed ; so far as the then condition of circumstances would permit, and so far only as such limitations could be introduced into a deed of conveyance or settlement without infringing upon any law against perpetuities which might then be in force. The person beneficially interested in the real estate was to be ascertained by reference to the following limitations :—

1. To the defendant Jatindra for life.
2. To his eldest son, born during the testator's lifetime, for life.
3. In strict settlement upon the first and other sons of such eldest son in tail male.
4. Similar limitations for life and in tail male upon the other sons of Jatindra, born in the testator's lifetime, and their sons successively.
5. Limitations in tail male upon the sons of Jatindra born after the testator's death.
6. "After the failure or determination of the uses and estates hereinbefore limited to the defendant Surendra for life."
7. Like limitations for his sons and their sons.
8. Upon failure or determination of that estate, like limitations in favour of the sons of Lalit Mohun, who was dead at the making of the will, and their sons. The will expressly adopted primogeniture in the male line through males, and excluded women and their descendants, and all rights of provision or maintenance of either man or woman. It also forbid the application of any rule of English law whereby

entails might be barred, showing an intent that each tenant, though of inheritance, should be prohibited from alienation. The personalty was practically to pass under similar limitations to the person who would from time to time be entitled to the realty. Tagore case.

The only provision made by the testator for the plaintiff his son consisted of property producing R. 7000 per annum, settled upon him at his marriage. His being disinherited arose from his having subsequently become a Christian. Of course under Act XXI of 1850 this circumstance was no bar to his claim as heir.

At the time of the testator's death, Jatindra, the head of the first series of estates, had no son, nor had he any during the suit.

Surendra, the head of the second series of estates, had a son, Promoth Kumar, who was born in the lifetime of the testator.

Lalit Mohun, the head of the third series, was dead at the making of the will, but left a grandson, Suttendra, born during the lifetime of the testator, and capable of taking under the will. These were the only persons beneficially interested under the limitations of the real estate.

The son, as might have been expected, sued to set aside this will, except as to the legacies; contending, 1st, that it was wholly void as to the ancestral estate; 2nd, that in any case the father was bound to provide him with an adequate maintenance, the adequacy being estimated, not with reference to his own actual wants, but to the magnitude of the estate; 3rd, that the whole framework of the will, resting as it did on a devise to trustees, was void, since the Hindu law recognized no distinction between legal and equitable estates; 4th, that the life estate to Jatindra was void, since a Hindu testator could bequeath nothing less than what was termed "his whole bundle of rights;" 5th, that at all events the estates following upon this life estate were void, as infringing the law against perpetuities; and 6th, that as to everything after the life estate there was an intestacy, and the plaintiff was entitled as heir-at-law, notwithstanding the express words of the will that he was to take nothing under it. Objections raised.

Tagore case.

Father's power
of devise

may be exercised
through trustees

Estate may be
divided by
limitations.

§ 353. The first four points were disposed of with little difficulty. The original and appeal Courts were of opinion that the power of a father in Bengal to bequeath all his property, of every sort, was beyond discussion, and that it went so far as to exclude the son even from maintenance (*q*). The Privy Council did not enter upon this question, being of opinion that in any case the maintenance actually allotted to the son was adequate (*r*). The 3rd objection was also set aside (*s*). The Judicial Committee said (*t*), "The anomalous law which has grown up in England of a legal estate which is paramount in one set of Courts, and an equitable ownership which is paramount in Courts of Equity, does not exist in, and ought not to be introduced into, Hindu law. But it is obvious that property, whether movable or immovable, must for many purposes be vested more or less absolutely in some person or persons for the benefit of other persons, and trusts of various kinds have been recognized and acted on in India in many cases (*u*). The distinction between 'legal' and 'equitable' represents only the accident of falling under diverse jurisdictions, and not the essential characteristic of a possession in one for the convenience and benefit of another." As to the 4th objection, the Courts dismissed it also. Peacock, C. J., referring to a doubtful expression of the Judicial Committee in 10 M. I. A. 311, and the express decision in *Rewun Persad v. Mussumat Radha Beeby* (*x*), said, "If a testator can disinherit his son by devising the whole of his estate to a stranger, there seems to be no reason why he should not be able to divide his estate by giving particular and limited interests in the whole of the property to different persons in existence, or who may come into existence during his lifetime, to be taken in succession, as well as by giving his whole interest or bundle of rights in particular portions of land included in his estate to different persons (*y*).

(*q*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 132, 159.

(*r*) 9 B. L. R. 413.

(*s*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 134, 161; *Krishnaramani v. Ananda Krishna*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 278, 284, explaining the remarks of the C. J., in *Kumara Asima v. Kumara Kristna Deb*, 2 B. L. R., O. C. 36.

(*t*) 9 B. L. R. 401. See 8 W. R. 399; 2 Mad. H. C. 272.

(*u*) See *Gopeekrist Gosain v. Gungapersad Gosain*, 6 M. I. A. 53.

(*x*) 4 M. I. A. 137.

(*y*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 166; 9 B. L. R. 405.

§ 354. The 5th point was decided in favour of the plaintiff, not upon any application of the English doctrine of perpetuities, which was held to be founded upon special considerations which had no place in Hindu law (z), but upon the general principle that the kind of estate tail which the testator wished to create was one wholly unknown and repugnant to Hindu law (a). That he was in fact trying to introduce a new law of inheritance, which should make all the subsequent holders of the estate take it in an order, and with restrictions and exemptions wholly opposed to the principles of law which governed the testator and his family. Their lordships of the Privy Council observed (b): "The power of parting with property once acquired, so as to confer the same property upon another, must take place either by inheritance or transfer, each according to law. Inheritance does not depend on the will of the individual owner; transfer does. Inheritance is a rule laid down (or, in the case of custom, recognized) by the State, not merely for the benefit of individuals, but for reasons of public policy. Domat., 2413. It follows directly from this that a private individual who attempts by gift or will to make property inheritable otherwise than the law directs, is assuming to legislate, and that the gift must fail, and the inheritance take place as the law directs. This was well expressed by Lord Justice Turner in *Soorjeemoney Dossee v. Denobundo Mullick* (c): 'A man cannot create a new form of estate, or alter the line of succession allowed by law, for the purpose of carrying out his own wishes or policy.' 'It follows that all estates of inheritance created by gift or will, so far as they are inconsistent with the general law of inheritance, are void as such, and that by Hindu law no person can succeed thereunder as heir to estates described in the terms which in English law would designate estates tail.'

Devise must conform to ordinary law of property.

Tagore case.

§ 355. The result, therefore, was that the life estate to

(z) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 167; *Goberdone Bysack v. Sham Chand Bysack*, Bourke, 282, 2 B. L. R., O. C. 11, 32. As to religious perpetuities, see *post*, § 361.

(a) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 171, 212.

(b) 9 B. L. R. 394, 396. See 8 M. I. A. 78.

(c) 6 M. I. A. 555, *sic*. But these words are not to be found in the judgment referred to.

Estate tail
invalid.

Jatindra was valid, but the estates to successive holders would be void if they could be held as coming in as heirs in tail. It was, however, contended that successive persons might be regarded as successive donees for life, having the power and subject to the restrictions sought to be imposed by the will upon the successive heirs in tail (*d*). If so, they also would defeat the rights of the plaintiff as heir-at-law.

These donees fell into two classes: 1st, those not in existence at the death of the testator, but who might come into existence before the first life estate fell in; 2nd, those who were in existence at his death.

Jatindra had no sons alive at the death of the testator. But of course he might have sons, and in default of natural-born sons might adopt, as under the will each successive taker was authorized to do. The second and third series of estates were also represented by persons living at the testator's death.

Donee must be
in existence at
death.

✓

It was held that none of these could take. Not the possible issue of Jatindra; because the donee must be a person capable of taking at the time when the gift takes effect, and must either in fact or in contemplation of law (*e*) be in existence at the death of the testator (*f*). Not the existing representatives of the 2nd and 3rd series of estates, because they were only to take "after the failure or determination" of the previous series, and these words were held to mean the actual exhaustion of the line of Jatindra in conformity with the will, and not its incapacity to succeed by reason of the illegality of the will. Consequently, the event on which they were to take had never arisen and never could arise (*g*). Finally it was held that all the bequests must be looked on as if they had been made directly to the persons who were the subjects of them, and that the intervention of trustees made no difference, since that which could not be

Trust for illegal
purpose invalid.

(*d*) 9 B. L. R. 396.

(*e*) That is when in embryo at the death, or adopted subsequently to death, under authority given before it.

(*f*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 188, 191, 221; 9 B. L. R. 396—400; *Krishnaramani Dasi v. Ananda Krishna Bose*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 231, 279, overruling *Armugum Mudali v. Ammi Ammal*, 1 M. H. C. 400; *Strimati Brahmamayi v. Jages Chandra Dutt*, 8 B. L. R. 400; *Ramgutte Acharjee v. Kristo Soonduree*, 20 W. R. 472; *Soudaminy Dossee v. Jogesh Chunder Dutt*, 2 Calc. 262.

(*g*) 9 B. L. R. 409.

Alhanga Manjari v. Sonawani. 8 All R Cal 157, 637
Rally v. Chunder (N. 1802) - - - 378

done directly, could not be done indirectly by the medium of a trust (*h*). The result was that the plaintiff, the heir-at-law, was held entitled to the whole estate after the life of Jatindra, subject to the payment of legacies and annuities.

§ 356. This case has been cited at great length on account of the numerous points decided by it, and also as establishing in the most authoritative manner, that the power of devise by a Hindu is limited as to the objects and subjects of the bequest, by the general purposes of Hindu law. On this ground wills containing trusts to accumulate the proceeds of the property have been held invalid. In one, the trust was to accumulate for ninety-nine years, and no direction was given as to the appropriation of the fund at the end of the time (*i*). In another, the fund was to accumulate till it reached three lakhs, and was then to be divided, and the process of accumulation to recommence (*k*). Such provisions not only create an estate held in a manner and for purposes foreign to Hindu law, but are also repugnant to the very nature of property, as forbidding its enjoyment by the owner, or, indeed, putting property in a position to have no owner at all. As Mr. Justice Norman remarked in the former case (*l*), "A testator cannot, in giving his property by will, impose conditions in contravention of the objects for which property exists, or contrary to the policy of the law. For instance, suppose an estate were given to a man on condition that it should be allowed to relapse into a jungle, or never be cultivated, no one could doubt that such a condition would be void." So a will would be invalid which forbade alienation within the limits incidental to the estate created (*m*), or prohibited partition by the persons entitled to divide (*n*), or attempted to free property from any of the burthens incident to it by law, such as lia-

Directions for accumulation.

Illegal conditions.

(*h*) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 162, 195; 9 B. L. R. 402; *Kumara Asima Krishna Deb v. Kumara Krishna Deb*, 2 B. L. R., O. C. 11; *Krishnaramani Dasi v. Ananda Krishna Bose*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 274.

(*i*) *Kumara Asima v. Kumara Krishna Deb*, 2 B. L. R., O. C. 11.

(*k*) *Krishnaramani Dasi v. Ananda Krishna Bose*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 231.

(*l*) 2 B. L. R., O. C. 25.

(*m*) 2 B. L. R., O. C. 25; *Nitai Charan Pyne v. Ganga Dasi*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 265, n.; *Promotho Dossee v. Radhika Persaud*, 14 B. L. R. 175; *Ashutosh Dutt v. Doorga Churn Chatterjee*, 6 I. A. 182.

(*n*) *Nubkissen Mitter v. Hurrishchunder*, F. MacN. 323; *Mokundo Lall v. Gonesh Chunder*, 1 Calc. 104.

Ineffectual
provisions.

bility to debts, or maintenance of those whose support is a burthen upon the estate (o). So it has been held in Madras by Mr. Justice Holloway that a clause in a will whereby the enjoyment of the property by the son, who was heir-at-law, was postponed beyond the period of minority was invalid, on the ground that this was, *pro tanto*, taking away from the son a right of property which the law of the Mitāksharā vested in him (p). A similar decision was given upon a Bengal will, where the testator had attempted to postpone the enjoyment of the shares of his grand-children until they had attained twenty-one, on the ground that by Hindu law an estate cannot remain in suspense, or without an owner (q). But, of course, a father in Bengal could delay, just as he could defeat, the rights of his issue, by interposing a valid estate previous to theirs (r).

Form of will
immaterial.

§ 357. As regards form, the will of a Hindu may be oral, though, of course, in such a case the strictest proof will be required of its terms (s). So a paper drawn up in accordance with the instructions of the testator, and assented to by him, will be a good will, though not signed (t). And if a paper contains the testamentary wishes of the deceased, its form is immaterial. For instance, petitions addressed to officials, or answers to official enquiries, have been held to amount to a will (u). And a will may be revoked orally, or in any other manner by which it might have been made (x). Nor are technical words necessary. The single rule of construction in a Hindu, as in an English will, is to try and find out the meaning of the testator, taking the whole of the document together, and to give effect to this meaning. In

(o) *Sonatum Bysack v. Sreemutty Juggetsoondery Doss*, 8 M. I. A. 66, 76. See post, § 389.

(p) *Devaraja v. Venayaga*, and *Cunniah Chetty v. Lutchmenarasoo*, both decided in the Original Court, 23 May, 1867, MS. See too *Mokundo Lall v. Gonesh Chunder*, 1 Calc. 104; *Gosling v. Gosling*, John. 265.

(q) *Strimati Bramayi v. Jages Chandra*, 14 B. L. R. 400.

(r) *Hurrosoondery v. Cowar Kistonaath*, Fulton, 393.

(s) *Beer Pertab v. Rajender*, 12 M. I. A. 2; ante, § 335. See now the Hindu Wills Act, XXI of 1870, which applies to Hindus in Bengal, and the towns of Madras and Bombay.

(t) *Tāra Chund v. Nobin Chunder*, 3 W. R. 138; *Radhabai v. Ganesh Tatya*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 7.

(u) *Mahomed v. Shewukram*, 2 I. A. 7; *Hurpershad v. Sheo Dhyal*, 3 I. A. 259.

(x) *Pertab Narain v. Subhao*, 4 I. A. 228.

applying this principle, special care must be taken not to judge the language used by a Hindu according to the artificial rules which have been applied to the language of Englishmen, who live under a different system of law, and in a different state of society (*y*). A devise in general terms, without words of inheritance, or with words imperfectly describing an estate of inheritance, will pass the entire estate of the testator, unless a contrary intention appears from the context (*z*). On the other hand, stronger words, and a more evident intention, would be required to pass an absolute estate, where the bequest was to a woman, and especially where it would operate to the prejudice of the testator's issue (*a*). But although every effort will be made to carry out the wishes of the testator, where they are ascertainable and legal, the Court cannot make a new will for them. Therefore a will must fail, if its terms are so vaguely expressed that it is impossible to ascertain what are the testator's objects (*b*). And if the intention of the testator is obviously to do something that is illegal, the Court will not put a non-natural construction upon his language, so as to turn an illegal into a legal arrangement (*c*). The result, of course, will be an intestacy as to so much of the property as has been ineffectually disposed of, and the residue will go to the heir-at-law, however positive the expression of the testator's wish may have been that he should not take. The estate must go to somebody, and there is no one to whom it can go except the heir-at-law. As Peacock, C. J., said in the Tagore case, "A mere expression in a will that the heir-at-law shall not take any part of the testator's estate is not

Intention is the guide of interpretation

where vague, or illegal.

(*y*) See *per Turner, L. J., Streemutty v. Denobundo*, 6 M. I. A. 550; *per Ld. Kingsdown, Mt. Bhoobun v. Ram Kishore*, 10 M. I. A. 308; *Lakshmibai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 2 I. A. 7, 14; 2 Bomb. O. C. 151; 2 Bomb. L. R. 408.

(*z*) *Per Willes, J., Tagore v. Tagore*, 9 B. L. R. 395; *Streemutty Sursutty v. Poorno Chunder*, 4 W. R. 55; *Broughton v. Pogose*, 12 B. L. R. 74.

(*a*) *Lukhee Debea v. Gokool Chunder*, 13 M. I. A. 209; *Mahomed Shumshul v. Shewukram*, 2 I. A. 7, 14; *Mt. Bhagbutty v. Chowdhry Bholanath*, 2 I. A. 256; *Prosunno v. Tarucknath*, 10 B. L. R. 267; *Mt. Kollany v. Luchmee Pershad*, 24 W. R. 395; *Jeevun Punda v. Mt. Sona*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 66.

(*b*) *Sandial v. Maitland*, Fulton, 475. See 2 B. L. R., O. C. 38; 4 B. L. R., O. C. 198; *Jarman's Estate*, 8 Ch. D. 584.

(*c*) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 9 B. L. R. 407. See as to the proper interpretation to be put upon wills, where questions of remoteness arise, *Armugum v. Ammi Ammall*, 1 Mad. H. C. 400; *Strimati Brahmani v. Jages Chandra*, 8 B. L. R. 400; *Soudaninee v. Jogesh Chunder*, 2 Cal. 262.

8 J. R. Cal. 357.

Disinheritance. sufficient to disinherit him, without a valid gift of the estate to some one else. He will take by descent, and by his right of inheritance, whatever is not validly disposed of by the will, and given to some other person (d).” On the other hand, it is not necessary that a will should contain an express declaration of a testator’s desire or intention to disinherit his heirs, if there is an actual and complete gift to some other person capable of taking under it (e).

A devise which cannot take effect at all is as if it had never been made. Consequently the property devised passes to the heir. The rule of the English Common law that an undisposed of residue vests in the executor beneficially, does not apply in case of a Hindu will (f). But where a testator leaves a legacy absolutely as regards his estate, but restricts the mode of the legatee’s enjoyment to secure certain objects for the benefit of the legatee, if the objects fail, the absolute gift prevails (g).

Possession.

§ 358. As possession under a devise is not necessary to its validity, so neither is it necessary that the legatee should be capable of assenting to it. Therefore a bequest in favour of an idiot or an infant will be valid. And so it will be in any other case, although the legatee would have been incapable of inheriting from some personal disability (h).

(d) 4 B. L. R., O. C. 187; 9 B. L. R. 402; *Promotho Dossee v. Radhika Persad*, 14 B. L. R. 175; *Lallubhai v. Mankuverbai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 488.

(e) *Prosonno Comar v. Tarucknath*, 10 B. L. R. 267, disapproving of *Rooplall v. Mohima Churn*, ib. 271, note.

(f) *Ante*, § 355. *Lallubhai v. Mankuverbai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 388.

(g) *Administrator-General of Bengal v. Apar*, 3 Calc. 553.

(h) *Kooldebnarain v. Mt. Wooma Coomaree*, Marsh. 357.

CHAPTER XII.

RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS.

§ 359. GIFTS for religious and charitable purposes were naturally favoured by the Brâhmans, as they are everywhere by the priestly class. Çankha lays down the general principle that "wealth was conferred for the sake of defraying sacrifices" (a). Gifts for religious purposes are made by Kátyâyana an exception to the rule that gifts are void when made by a man who is afflicted with disease and the like, and he says that if the donor dies without giving effect to his intention, his son shall be compelled to deliver it (b). This is an exception to the rule that a gift is invalid without delivery of possession. The Bengal pandits state that this principle applies even against a son under the Mitâksharâ law, though his assent would be indispensable if the gift was for a secular object; they seem, however, to limit the application of the rule to a gift of a small portion of the land (c). In Western India grants of this nature have been held valid; even when made by a widow, of land which descended to her from her husband, and to the prejudice of her husband's male heirs (d). And so a grant by a man to his family priests, to take effect after the life estate of his widow, was decided to be good (e).

Religious gifts
favoured.

§ 360. The principle that such gifts can be enforced against the donor's heirs, would naturally slide into a practice of making them by will (§ 337). It is probable

(a) 3 Dig. 484.

(b) 2 Dig. 96. See Manu, ix. 323; Vyâsa, 2 Dig. 189; Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 27, 32.

(c) See futwah, *Gopal Chand v. Babu Kunwar*, v. 5 S. D. 24 (29); Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 28.

(d) *Jugjeevun Nuthoojee v. Deosunker*, 1 Bor. 394; *Kupoor Bhuwannee v. Sevukram*, ib. 405, but see *Umbashunker v. Tooljaram*, 1 Bor. 400; *Muhelukmee v. Kripashookul*, 2 Bor. 510; *Ramanund v. Ramkissen Dutt*, 2 M. Dig. futwah, at p. 117. See too, *post*, § 542.

(e) *Keshoor Poonjiya v. Mt. Ramkoonwar*, 2 Bor. 314.

Effectuated by will. that as Brâhmanical acuteness favoured family partition as a means of multiplying family ceremonies, so it fostered the testamentary power as a mode of directing property to religious uses, at a time when the owner was becoming indifferent to its secular application. Many of the wills held valid in the Supreme Court of Calcutta have been remarkable for the large amounts they disposed of for religious purposes (*f*). In one case arising out of *Gokulchunder Corformah's* will, where practically the whole property had been assigned for the use of an idol, the Court declared the will proved, but wholly inoperative, except as regards a legacy to the stepmother of the testator (*g*). Sir F. MacNaghten suggests that the will might properly have been cancelled, as, upon its face, the production of a madman. No reason can be offered why such a will should be set aside in Bengal, merely because the whole property was devoted to religious objects. In the case of *Radhabullubh Tagore v. Gopeemohun Tagore*, which was decided in Calcutta the very next year (1811), the right of a Hindu so to apply the whole of his property, seems to have been admitted (*h*).

Superstitious
uses not for-
bidden,

nor perpetuities.

§ 361. The English law, which forbids bequests for superstitious uses, does not apply to grants of this character in India, even in the Presidency Towns (*i*), and such grants have been repeatedly enforced by the Privy Council (*k*). Nor are they invalid for transgressing against the rule which forbids the creation of perpetuities. "It being assumed to be a principle of Hindu law that a gift can be made to an idol, which is a *caput mortuum*, and incapable of alienating, you cannot break in upon that principle by engrafting upon it the English law of perpetuities (*l*)."

(*f*) F. MacN. 323, 331, 336—347, 349, 350, 371; *Ramtonoo Mullick v. Ramgopal Mullick*, 1 Kn. 245. The same thing was remarked by Sir Thomas Strange as a feature in the wills made by Hindus in Madras. 2 Stra. H. L. 453.

(*g*) F. MacN. 320, Appx. 58.

(*h*) F. MacN. 333.

(*i*) *Das Mercus v. Cones*, 2 Hyde, 65; *Andrews v. Joakim*, 2 B. L. R., O. C. 148; *Judah v. Judah*, 5 B. L. R. 433; *Khusal Chand v. Mahadevgiri*, 12 Bomb. 214.

(*k*) *Ramtonoo Mullick v. Ramgopal Mullick*, 1 Kn. 245; *Jewun Doss v. Shah Kubeerood-deen*, 2 M. I. A. 390; *Sonatun Bysack v. Sreemutty Juggetsoonderee*, 8 M. I. A. 66; *Juggutmohini Dossee v. Mt. Sokheemoney*, 14 M. I. A. 289.

(*l*) *Per Markby, J.*, 2 B. L. R., O. C. p. 47.

fact both the cases in which the Bengal High Court in 1869 set aside the will as creating secular estates of a perpetual nature, contained devises of an equally perpetual nature in favour of idols, which were supported (*m*). But where a will, under the form of a devise for religious purposes, really gives the beneficial interest to the devisees, subject merely to a trust for the performance of the religious purposes, it will be governed by the ordinary Hindu law. Any provisions for perpetual descent, and for restraining alienation, will, therefore, be void. The result will be to set aside the will, as regards the descent of the property, leaving the heirs-at-law liable to keep up the idols, and defray the proper expenses of the worship (*n*).

Colourable
religious
endowment.

§ 362. As an idol cannot itself hold lands, the practice is to vest the lands in a trustee for the religious purpose, or to impose upon the holder of the lands a trust to defray the expenses of the worship (*o*). Sometimes the donor is himself the trustee. Such a trust is of course valid, if perfectly created, though, being voluntary, the donor cannot be compelled to carry it out if he has left it imperfect (*p*). But the effect of the transaction will differ materially, according as the property is absolutely given for the religious object, or merely burthened with a trust for its support. And there will be a further difference where the trust is only an apparent, and not a real one, and where it creates no rights in any one except the holder of the fund.

Tenure in
trustee.

§ 363. The last case arises where the founder applies his own property to the creation of a pagoda, or any other religious or charitable foundation, keeping the property itself, and the control over it, absolutely in his own hands. The community may be greatly benefited by this arrangement, so long as it lasts, but its continuance is entirely at his own pleasure. It is like a private chapel in a gentleman's park, and the fact that the public have been permitted to resort

Trust imperfect.

(*m*) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 103, in the P. C., 9 B. L. R. 377; *Krishnaramani v. Ananda Krishna*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 231.

(*n*) *Promotho Dossee v. Radhika Persad Dutt*, 14 B. L. R. 175; *Phate Saheb v. Damodar*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 84.

(*o*) See *futwah* in *Kounla Kant v. Ram Huree Nund*, 4 S. D. 196, (247).

(*p*) See *Lewin, Trusts*, p. 61.

to it, will not prevent its being closed, or pulled down, provided there has been no dedication of it to the public. It will pass equally unencumbered to his heirs, or to his assignees in insolvency. He may diminish the funds so appropriated at pleasure, or absolutely cease to apply them to the purpose at all (*q*). In short, the character of the property will remain unchanged, and its application will be at his own discretion.

Property held
under trust.

Another state of things arises where land or other property is held in beneficial ownership, subject merely to a trust as to part of the income, for the support of some religious endowment. Here again the land descends and is alienable, and partible (*r*), in the ordinary way, the only difference being that it passes with the charge upon it (*s*).

Absolute
dedication of
property.

The remaining case is the one first named, where the whole property is devoted, absolutely and in perpetuity, to the religious purposes. Here of course the trustee has no beneficial interest in the property, beyond what he is given by the express terms of the trust. He cannot encumber or dispose of it for his own personal benefit, nor can it be taken in execution for his personal debt. But he may do any act which is necessary or beneficial, in the same manner and to the same degree as would be allowable in the case of the manager of an infant heir. He may, within those limits, incur debts, mortgage and alien the property, and bind it by judgments properly obtained against him (*t*). And he may lease out the property in the usual manner, but he cannot create any other than proper derivative tenures and estates conformable to usage; nor can he make a lease, or any other

Powers of
trustee.

(*q*) *Howard v. Pestonji*, Perry, O. C. 535; *Venkatachellamiah v. P. Narainapah*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 104; 1854, 100; *Chemmenthatti v. Meyene*, Mad. Dec. of 1862, 90; 2 W. MacN. 103; *Brojosoonderee v. Luchmee Koonwaree*, in the P. C., 15 B. L. R. 176, n.; *Delroos Banoo Begum v. Nawab Syud Ashgar*, 15 B. L. R. 167, affirmed in P. C. 3 Calc. 324.

(*r*.) *Ram Coomar Paul v. Jogender Nath*, 4 Calc. 56.

(*s*) *Mahatab Chand v. Mirdad Ali*, 5 S. D. 268 (313), approved by P. C., 15 B. L. R., p. 178; *Futtoo Bibee v. Bhurrut Lall*, 10 W. R. 299; *Basoo Dhul v. Kishen Chunder*, 13 W. R. 200; *Sonatun Bysack v. Sreemutty Juggatsoonderee*, 8 M. I. A. 66.

(*t*) *Prosunno Kumari v. Golab Chand*, 2 I. A. 145; *Konwur Doorganath v. Ramchunder Sen*, 4 I. A. 52; *Kalee Churn v. Bungshee Mohun*, 15 W. R. 339; *Khusal Chand v. Mahadevgiri*, 12 Bomb. 214; *Fegredo v. Mahomed*, 15 W. R. 75.

arrangement which will bind his successor, unless the necessity for the transaction is completely established (*u*).

§ 364. The devolution of the trust, upon the death or default of each trustee, depends upon the terms upon which it was created, or the usage of each particular institution, where no express trust-deed exists (*v*). Where nothing is said in the grant as to the succession, the right of management passes by inheritance to the natural heirs of the donee, according to the rule, that a grant without words of limitation conveys an estate of inheritance (*x*). The property passes with the office, and neither it nor the management is divisible among the members of the family (*y*). Where no other arrangement or usage exists, the management may be held in turns by the several heirs (*z*). Sometimes the constitution of the body vests the management in several, as representing different interests, or as a check upon each other, and any act which alters such a constitution would be invalid (*a*). Where the head of a religious institution is bound to celibacy, it is frequently the usage that he nominates his successor by appointment during his own lifetime, or by will (*b*). Sometimes this nomination requires confirmation by the members of the religious body. Sometimes the right of election is vested in them (*c*). In no case can

Devolution of trust.

(*u*) *Radhabullabh Chund v. Juggutchunder*, 4 S. D. 151 (192); *Shibessuree v. Mothoranath*, 13 M. I. A. 270; *Jugessur Buttobyal v. Roodro Narain*, 12 W. R. 299; *Tahboonissa v. Koomar Sham Kishore*, 15 W. R. 228; *Arrath Misser v. Juggurnath*, 18 W. R. 439; *Mohunt Burm Soorooop v. Khashee Jha*, 20 W. R. 471; *Bunwaree Chand v. Mudden Mohun*, 21 W. R. 41.

(*v*) *Greedharee Doss v. Nundkishore*, Marsh. 573; 11 M. I. A. 428; *Muttu Ramalinga v. Perianayagam*, 1 I. A. 209. See various cases collected, 1 M. Dig. 330.

(*x*) *Chutter Sein's case*, 1 S. D. 180 (239); *S. Venkatachellamiah v. P. Narainapah*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 104. See *Tagore case*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 182; 9 B. L. R., P. C. 395.

(*y*) *Jaafar Mohiudin v. Aji Mohiudin*, 2 Mad. H. C. 19; *Kumarasawmy v. Ramalinga*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 261.

(*z*) *Nubkissen v. Hurrischunder*, 2 M. Dig. 146. See *Anundmoyee v. Boykanthnath*, 8 W. R. 193; *Ramsoonder v. Taruck Chunder*, 19 W. R. 28; *Mitta Kunth v. Neerunjun*, 14 B. L. R. 166. There is nothing to prevent a female being manager. See *Moottoo Menatchi v. Villoo Bhutter*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 136; *Joy Deb Surniah v. Huroputty*, 16 W. R. 282. See *Hussain Bibi v. Hussain Sherif*, 4 Mad H. C. 23; *Punjab Customs*, 88; Special custom is necessary, *Janokee Debea v. Gopal Acharjea*, 2 Calc. 365. *confirmed by P.C. 92. R. Cal 766*

(*a*) *Rajah Vurmah v. Ravi Vurmah*, 4 I. A. 76.

(*b*) *Hoogly v. Kishnanund*, S. D. of 1848, 253; *Soobramaneya v. Aroomooga*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 33; *Greedharee v. Nundokishore*, 11 M. I. A. 405.

(*c*) *Mohunt Gopal Doss v. Kerparam Das*, S. D. of 1850, 250; *Narain Das v. Brindabun Das*, 2 S. D. 151 (192); *Gossain Dowlut v. Bissessur Gir*, 19 W. R. 215; *Madho Das v. Kamta Das*, 1 All. 539.

the trustee sell the right of management, though coupled with the obligation to manage in conformity with the trusts annexed thereto (*d*).

Founder's
rights.

§ 365. Unless the founder has reserved to himself some special powers of supervision, removal, or nomination, neither he nor his heirs have any greater power in this respect than any other person who is interested in the trust (*e*). And such powers, when reserved, must be strictly followed (*f*). But where the succession to the office of trustee has wholly failed, it has been held that the right of management reverts to the heirs of the founder (*g*).

Trust irre-
vocable.

A trust for religious purposes, if once lawfully and completely created, is of course irrevocable (*h*). The beneficial ownership cannot, under any circumstances, revert to the founder or his family. If any failure in the objects of the trusts takes place, the only suit which he can bring is to have the funds applied to their original purpose, or to one of a similar character (*i*).

(*d*) *Rajah Vurmah v. Ravi Vurmah*, 4 I. A. 76, overruling *Ragunada v. Chinappa*, 4 Mad. Rev. Reg. 109.

(*e*) *Teertaruppa Moodilly v. Soonderajien*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 57; *Lutchmee v. Rookmanee*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 152.

(*f*) *Advocate-General v. Fatima Sultani*, 9 Bomb. 19.

(*g*) *Mt. Jai Bansi Kunwar v. Chattar Dari*, 5 B. L. R. 181, but see Act XX of 1863; *Phate Saheb v. Damodar*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 84.

(*h*) *Juggetmohini Dossee v. Sokheemonee*, 14 M. I. A. 289; *Punjab Customs*, 92.

(*i*) *Mohesh Chunder v. Koylash Chunder*, 11 W. R. 443; *Reasut Ali v. Abbott*, 12 W. R. 132; *Nam Narain Singh v. Ramoon Paurey*, 23 W. R. 76; *Atty.-Gen. v. Brodie*, 4 M. I. A. 190; *Mayor of Lyons v. Adv.-Gen. of Bengal*, 3 I. A. 32. See Act XX of 1863; *Panchcowrie Mull v. Chumroolal*, 3 Calc. 563.

CHAPTER XIII.

BENAMI TRANSACTIONS.

§ 366. THERE probably is no country in the world except India, where it would be necessary to write a chapter "On the practice of putting property into a false name." Yet this is the literal explanation of a Benami transaction, and such transactions are so common as to have given rise to a very considerable body of decisions. Sir George Campbell says of the Benami system, "The most respectable man feels that if he has not need to cheat any one at present, he may some day have occasion to do so, and it is the custom of the country. So he puts his estate in the name of his wife's grandmother, under a secret trust. If he is pressed by creditors or by opposing suitors, it is not his. If his wife's grandmother plays him false, he brings a suit to declare the trust (a)." In many cases, however, the object of masking the real ownership was not to prepare the means of future fraud, but to avoid personal annoyance and oppression by providing an ostensible owner who might appear in Court, and before the Government officials, to represent the estate. In some instances the practice can only be accounted for by that mysterious desire which exists in the native mind, to make every transaction seem different from what it really is. Whatever be the origin of it, the custom of vesting property in a fictitious owner, known as the Benamidar, has been long since recognized by the Courts of India, and by the Privy Council. Even the familiar principle that a tenant cannot dispute his landlord's title has been made to yield to its influence. A tenant, when sued for rent due to his lessor, has been allowed to prove that the person from whom,

Origin of
Benami.

(a) Systems of Land Tenure, 181.

Tenancy no
estoppel.

nominally, he accepted a lease, was only a benamidar for a third person, to whom the rent was really due (*b*). And conversely, where a landlord had accepted rent continuously from persons in whose name a lease had been taken for the benefit of their husbands, when the benamidars were unable to pay, he was allowed to sue the persons really interested in the lease (*c*).

Principles of
Benami.

§ 367. Of course the law of Benami is in no sense a branch of Hindu law. It is merely a deduction from the well-known principle of equity, that where there is a purchase by A. in the name of B., there is a resulting trust of the whole to A.; and where there is a voluntary conveyance by A. to B., and no trust is declared, or only a trust as to part, that there is a similar resulting trust in favour of the grantor as to the whole, or as to the residue, as the case may be, unless it can be made out that an actual gift was intended (*d*). In the English Courts an exception is made to this rule, where the person in whose name the conveyance is taken or made is a child of the real owner; when the transaction is presumed to have been made by way of advancement to him. But this exception has not been admitted in India. There the rule is well established, that in all cases of asserted benami the true criterion is to ascertain from whose funds the purchase-money proceeded. Whether the nominal owner be a child or a stranger, a purchase made with the money of another is *primâ facie* assumed to be made for the benefit of that other (*e*). It has been suggested, that where a conveyance was taken by a Hindu in the name of a daughter, the probability that it was intended as an advancement would be much stronger than if it were taken in the name of a son; "for in a Hindu joint-family the son's holdings would always remain part of the common stock, whereas the daughters would, on their marriage, necessarily be separated" (*f*). But the existence of any distinction of this

(*b*) *Donzelle v. Kedarnath*, 7 B. L. R. 720.

(*c*) *Debnath v. Gudadhur*, 18 W. R. 132.

(*d*) Lewin, Trusts, 127, 144.

(*e*) *Gopeekrist v. Gunga Pershad*, 6 M. I. A. 53; *Moulvie Sayud v. Mt. Bebee*, 13 M. I. A. 232; *Bissessur Lal v. Luchmessur Singh*, 6 I. A. 233.

(*f*) *Obhoy Churn v. Panchanun*, Marsh. 564.

sort was denied in a much later case by Mr. Justice Mitter. He said, "So far as the ordinary and usual course of things is concerned, the practice of making benami purchases in the names of female members of joint undivided Hindu families is just as much rife in this country, as that of making such purchases in the names of male members"(g).

Of course the assertion that a transaction is not really what it professes to be, is one that will be regarded by the Courts with great suspicion, and must be strictly made out by evidence (h). But when the origin of the purchase-money is once made out, the subsequent acts done in the name of the nominal owner will be explained by reference to the real nature of the transaction. The same motive which dictated an ostensible ownership, would naturally dictate an apparent course of dealing in accordance with such ownership (i).

§ 368. Where a transaction is once made out to be Benami, the Courts of India, which are bound to decide according to equity and good conscience, will deal with it in the same manner as it would be treated by an English Court of Equity. The principle is that effect will be given to the real and not to the nominal title, unless the result of doing so would be to violate the provisions of a statute, or to work a fraud upon innocent persons. For instance, the real may sue the ostensible owner to establish his title, or to recover possession (k); and conversely, if the benamidar attempts to enforce his apparent title against the beneficial owner, the latter may establish the real nature of the transaction by way of defence (l). Similarly creditors who are enforcing their claims against the property of the real owner, will have exactly the same rights against his property held benami, as if it were in his real name (m); and conversely, if they

Strict proof.

Effect given to real title.

(g) *Chunder Nath v. Kristo Komul*, 15 W. R. 357.

(h) *Sreemanchunder v. Gopalchunder*, 11 M. I. A. 28; *Nawab Azimut v. Hurdwaree*, 13 M. I. A. 395; *Faez Buksh v. Fukeeroodeen*, 14 M. I. A. 234. Oral evidence is sufficient, *Palaniyappa v. Arumugum*, 2 Mad. H. C. 26; *Taramonee v. Shibnath*, 6 W. R. 191.

(i) *Mt. Beebee Nyamut v. Fuzl Hossein*, S. D. of 1859, 139; *Rohee Lal v. Dindyal*, 21 W. R. 257.

(k) *Mt. Thukrain Sookraj v. Government*, 14 M. I. A. 112.

(l) *Ramanugra v. Mahasunder*, in the P. C., 12 B. L. R. 433.

(m) *Musadee v. Meerza Ally*, 6 M. I. A. 27; *Hemanginee v. Jogendro*, 12 W. R. 236; *Gopi Wasudev v. Markande*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 30.

Violation of
statute.

seize this estate in execution of a decree against the benamidar, the real owner will be entitled to set aside the execution (*n*). On the other hand, there are various statutes which provide that in sales under a decree of Court, or for arrears of revenue, the certified purchaser shall be conclusively deemed to be the real purchaser, and shall not be liable to be ousted on the ground that his purchase was really made on behalf of another (*o*). Such acts of course bar the equitable jurisdiction of the Courts, but they will be strictly construed. Therefore if the real owner is actually and honestly in possession, and the benamidar attempts to oust him by virtue of his nominal title, the statute will not prevent the Courts from recognizing the unreal character of his claim (*p*). And a purchase made by the manager of a Hindu family in his own name, as is usual, would not be considered as coming within the meaning of such statutes (*q*).

Fraud on third
parties.

§ 369. Even independently of statute, the Courts will not enforce the rights of a real owner where they would operate to defraud innocent persons. One familiar instance occurs, where the benamidar has sold or mortgaged the property of which he is the ostensible owner, for value, to persons who had no knowledge that he was not the real owner. "If property is purchased in the name of a benamidar, and all the *indicia* of ownership are placed in his hands, the true owner can only get rid of the effect of an alienation by the benamidar, by showing that it was made without his own acquiescence, and that the purchaser took with notice of that fact" (*r*). But of course notice of the trust may be implied as well as express, and if a man deals with another who is not in possession, or who is unable to produce the proper documents of title, these facts may amount to notice which will make his transaction be subject to the

(*n*) *Tara Soonduree v. Oojul Monee*, 14 W. R. 111.

(*o*) See Act VIII of 1859, s. 260; X of 1877, s. 317; Act I of 1845, s. 21; Act XI of 1859, s. 36.

(*p*) *Mt. Bukuns v. Lalla Buhooree*, 14 M. I. A. 496; *Lokhee Narain v. Kalypuddo*, 2 I. A. 154.

(*q*) See *Toondun Singh v. Pokh Narain*, 13 W. R. 347; *Bodh Singh v. Gunesh Chunder*, in P. C. 12 B. L. R. 317.

(*r*) *Per Phear, J., Bhugwan Doss v. Upooch Singh*, 10 W. R. 185. See numerous cases, Marsh. 293, 564, 569; 3 W. R. 10; 5 W. R. 37; 9 W. R. 593; 24 W. R. 79.

real state of the title of the person with whom he deals (*s*). In such cases there is no deliberate intention on the part of the real owner to commit a fraud upon any one. But if he deliberately places all the means of committing a fraud in the hands of his benamidar, Equity will not allow him to assert his title to the detriment of a person who has actually been defrauded.

§ 370. A still stronger case is that in which property has been placed in a false name, for the express purpose of shielding it from creditors. As against them, of course, the transaction is wholly invalid (§ 368). But a very common form of proceeding is for the real owner to sue the benamidar, or to resist an action by the benamidar, alleging, or the evidence making out, that the sale was a merely colourable one, made for the express purpose of defrauding creditors. In other words, the party admits that he has apparently transferred his property to another to effect a fraud, but asks to have his act undone, now that the object of the fraud is carried out. The rule was for some time considered to be, that where this state of things was made out, the Court would invariably refuse relief, and would leave the parties to the consequences of their own misconduct; dismissing the plaint, when the suit was brought by the real owner to get back possession of his property (*t*), and refusing to listen to the defence, when he set it up in opposition to the person whom he had invested with the legal title (*u*). And persons who take under the real owner, whether as heirs or as purchasers, were treated in exactly the same manner as he was (*v*). On the other hand a contrary doctrine was laid down in more recent cases. In

Frauds upon
creditors.

(*s*) *Hakeem Meah v. Beejoy*, 22 W. R. 8; *Mancharji v. Kongseoo*, 6 Bomb. O. C. 59.

(*t*) *Ramindur v. Roopnarain*, 2 S. D. 118 (149); *Roushun v. Collector of Mysingsingh*, S. D. of 1846, 120; *Brincho Mye v. Ram Dolub*, S. D. of 1849, 276; *Rajnarain v. Jugunnath*, S. D. of 1851, 774; *Koonjee v. Jankee*, S. D. of 1852, 838; *Bhowanny Sunker v. Purem Bebee*, S. D. of 1853, 639; *Ramsoonder v. Anundnath*, S. D. of 1856, 542; *Hurry Sunker v. Kali Coomar*, W. R. of 1864, 265; *Alock Soondry v. Horo Lal*, 6 W. R., 287; *Keshub Chunder v. Vyas-monee*, 7 W. R., 118; *per curiam*, 13 M. I. A. 402; 4 B. L. R., P. C. 28, 29.

(*u*) *Obhoychurn v. Treelochun*, S. D. of 1859, 1639; *Ram Lall v. Kishen Chunder*, S. D. of 1860, i. 436; *per curiam*, 12 B. L. R., (P. C.) 438.

(*v*) *Luckhee Narain v. Taramonee*, 3 W. R., 92; *Purikheet v. Radha Kishen*, ib. 221; *Kaleenath v. Doyal Kristo*, 13 W. R., 87.

Frauds upon
creditors.

the first of these the plaintiff claimed registration of title as vendee of certain parties, whom the defendant asserted to have been merely benamidars for her, she being actually in possession. The sale by the benamidars was found to be without consideration. It appeared, however, that in a former suit, to which the defendant and the benamidars were all parties, she had maintained that the latter were the real owners. It was also found that the property had been placed in the name of the benamidars by the defendant's late husband for the purpose of defrauding his creditors. On these two grounds the Judge held that the defendant could not now rely on the real state of the title. The High Court of Bengal reversed his judgment on both points. On the latter point, Couch, C. J., said: "In many of these cases, the object of a benami transaction is to obtain what may be called a shield against a creditor; but notwithstanding this the parties are not precluded from showing that it was not intended that the property should pass by the instrument creating the benami, and that in truth it still remained in the person who professed to part with it." He then referred to English decisions, and proceeded, "Although, no doubt, it is improper that transactions of this kind should be entered into for the purpose of defeating creditors, yet the real nature of the transaction is what is to be discovered, the real rights of the parties. If the Courts were to hold that persons were concluded under such circumstances, they would be assisting in a fraud, for they would be giving the estate to a person when it was never intended that he should have it"(x).

Principle of
decision.

§ 371. Possibly the real rule is something intermediate between that which was laid down broadly in this last case, and in those which it appears to over-rule. Where a transaction is once made out to be a mere benami, it is evident that the benamidar absolutely disappears from the title. His name is simply an *alias* for that of the person beneficially interested. The fact that A. has assumed the name of

(x) *Streemutty Debia v. Bimola Soonduree*, 21 W. R., 422, followed *Gopeenath, v. Jado Ghose*, 23 W. R., 42; *Bykunt v. Goboollah*, 24 W. R., 391. See too *Birj Mohun v. Ram Nursingh*, 4 S. D. 341 (435); *Param Singh v. Lalji Mal*, 1 All. 403.

B. in order to cheat X., can be no reason whatever why a Court should assist or permit B. to cheat A. But if A. requires the help of the Court to get the estate to his own possession, or to get the title into his own name, it may be very material to consider whether A. has actually cheated X. or not. If he has done so by means of his *alias*, then it has ceased to be a mere mask, and has become a reality. It may be very proper for a Court to say that it will not allow him to resume the individuality, which he has once cast off in order to defraud others. If, however, he has not defrauded any one, there can be no reason why the Court should punish his intention by giving his estate away to B., whose roguery is even more complicated than his own. This appears to be the principle of the English decisions. For instance, persons have been allowed to recover property which they had assigned away in order to confer a parliamentary qualification upon a friend, who never sat in parliament; or in order to avoid serving in the office of a sheriff, where they ultimately paid the fine, instead of pleading that they had no property in the country; or where they had intended to defraud creditors, who in fact were never injured (*y*); or in order to avoid the effects of a conviction for a felony, which the grantor supposed he had committed, but which in fact he had not, and could not have committed (*z*). But where the fraudulent or illegal purpose has actually been effected by means of the colourable grant, then the maxim applies, "*In pari delicto potior est conditio possidentis.*" The Court will help neither party. "Let the estate lie where it falls" (*a*). But it was suggested by Lord Eldon that perhaps this rule would not be enforced in case of one who claimed under the settlor, but was himself not a party to the illegality or fraud (*b*). And in order to enable the grantee to retain the property, he must expressly set up

Has fraud gone beyond intention.

(*y*) *Birch v. Blagrove*, Amb. 264; *Cottington v. Fletcher*, 2 Atk. 156; *Platamone v. Staple*, G. Coop. 250; *Young v. Peachey*, 2 Atk. 254; *Symes v. Hughes*, L. R. 9 Eq. 475; per *Lord Westbury*, *Tennent v. Tennents*, L. R. 2 Sc. & D. 9; *Cecil v. Butcher*, 2 Jac. & W. 565.

(*z*) *Davies v. Otty*, 35 Beav. 208; *Manning v. Gill*, L. R. 13 Eq. 485.

(*a*) *Duke of Bedford v. Coke*, 2 Ves. Sen. 116; *Muckleston v. Brown*, 6 Ves. 68; *Chaplin v. Chaplin*, 3 P. W. 233; *Brackenbury v. Brackenbury*, 2 Jac. & W. 391; *Doe v. Roberts*, 2 B. & Ald. 367; *Lewin*, 93; *Story*, Eq. Jur. § 298.

(*b*) *Lewin*, 93; 6 Ves. 68.

the illegality of the object, and admit that he is holding for a different purpose from that for which he took the property (c).

Original purchase made as benami.

§ 372. Even before the recent decisions, it was held in Bengal that there was nothing to prevent a man enforcing his rights against a benamidar, where he had made a new purchase, taking the conveyance in the name of a stranger, even though he had done so for the purpose of preventing the property from being seized by creditors. The Court, after referring to the cases already cited, said, "In this case the plaintiff does not seek to render void an act done by him in fraud, or, in other words, to be relieved from the effect of his own fraudulent act. He simply sues to have a legal act enforced, an act legal in itself, though in the present instance done with a motive of keeping the property out of the reach of his creditors" (d). It may also be well to remember that the rules which govern benami transactions have no application to the case of gifts made in contemplation of insolvency, and with the intention of defrauding creditors (e). Nor to cases in which property has been sold or handed over to one creditor, in order to defeat an expected execution by another creditor (f). If the transfer is really intended to operate, and is not colourable, it is not a benami transaction. Whether it is valid or not, depends upon other considerations.

Insolvency.

Effect of decrees.

§ 373. Decrees are conclusive between the parties both as to the rights declared, and as to the character in which they sue. It is allowable for a third person, who was not on the record, to come in and show that a suit was really carried on for his benefit (g). So it is allowable for a person who is on the record, to show that a suit was carried on really against a person who was not a party to it. But where judgment is given in an apparently hostile suit, it is not allowable for either party to come in and assert that the fight was all a sham, and for the defendant on the record to

(c) *Haigh v. Kaye*, L. R. 7 Ch. 469.

(d) *Suboodra v. Bikromadit*, S. D. of 1858, 543, 548.

(e) See *Gnanabhai v. Srinavasa*, 4 Mad. H. C. 84.

(f) *Sankarappa v. Kamayya*, 3 Mad. H. C. 231; *Pullen v. Ramalinga*, 5 Mad. H. C. 368; *Tillakchund v. Jitamal*, 10 Bomb. 206.

(g) *Lachman Bibi v. Patniram*, 1 All. 510.

show, that so far from being really a defendant he was the plaintiff, and that so far from judgment having been recovered against him, he had really recovered judgment (h). Hence as a general rule it is desirable, if not necessary, that the benamidar should be a party to all suits which affect the property of which he is the nominal owner. But this is not necessary when there is no dispute as to his title being only apparent (i).

Benamidar
should be a
party.

(h) *Bhowabul v. Rajendro*, 13 W. R. 157.

(i) *Mt. Kurreemonissa v. Mohabut*, S. D. of 1851, 356.

CHAPTER XIV.

MAINTENANCE.

Persons who are entitled.

§ 374. THE importance and extent of the right of maintenance necessarily arises from the theory of an undivided family. Originally, no doubt, no individual member of the family had a right to anything but maintenance. This is still the law of Malabar (§ 217), and the case is much the same in an ordinary Hindu family under Mitāksharâ law prior to partition (§ 264). The head of the undivided family is bound to maintain its members, their wives and their children; to perform their ceremonies, and to defray the expenses of their marriages (a). In other words, those who would be entitled to share in the bulk of the property, are entitled to have all their necessary expenses paid out of its income. But the right of maintenance goes farther than this. Those who would be sharers, but for some personal disqualification, are also similarly entitled for themselves and their sons, for their wives, if chaste, and for their daughters. As for instance, those who from some mental or bodily defect are unable to inherit (b); illegitimate sons, when not entitled as heirs, even though the connection from which they sprung may have been adulterous (c); persons taken in adoption, whose adoption has proved invalid, or who have been deprived of their full rights by the subsequent birth of a legitimate son (d). Whether the same privilege extended to

(a) Manu, ix. § 108; Nârada, xiii. § 26—28, 33. This right is not founded on contract, and therefore a suit for maintenance, where there is no special contract, is not cognizable by a Small Cause Court. *Sidlingapa v. Sidava*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 624; *Apaji v. Gungubai*, ib. 632.

(b) Mitāksharâ, ii. 10; Dâya Bhâga, v. § 10, 11; D. K. S. iii. § 7—17; V. May., iv. 11, § 1—9; 2 W. & B. Introd. 30.

(c) Mitāksharâ, i. 12, § 3; *Muttusawmy v. Venkata Soobbha*, 2 Mad. H. C. 293; affirmed 12 M. I. A. 203; *Chuoturya v. Sahib Purkulad*, 7 M. I. A. 18; *Râhi v. Govind*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 97; *Viraramuthi v. Singaravelu*, 1 Mad. L. R. 306.

(d) Mitāksharâ, i. 11, § 28; Datta Chandrikâ, i. § 15. See ante, § 163—165

outcasts and their offspring, is a point upon which the authorities differ (*e*). Since Act XXI of 1859, it has ceased to be a point of any practical importance. Concubines also are entitled to be maintained, even though the connection with them is an adulterous one (*f*). But this liability only exists where the connection was of a permanent nature, analogous to that of the female slaves who in former times were recognized members of a man's family (*g*). *A fortiori* the widows of the members of the family are so entitled, provided they are chaste, and so long as they lead a virtuous life (*h*); and the parents, including the step-mother, and mother-in-law (*i*). The sister, or step-sister, is entitled to maintenance until her marriage, and to have her marriage expenses defrayed. After marriage, her maintenance is a charge upon her husband's family; but, if they are unable to support her, she must be provided for by the family of her father (*k*).

Persons who are entitled.

§ 375. There is some difference of opinion as to whether the right of maintenance is an absolute obligation, which attaches itself upon certain persons by virtue of their relationship to the destitute individual, or whether it is merely a claim upon the property of those who hold it, by virtue of their possession of the property. It is stated in a text ascribed to Manu, that "A mother and a father in their old age, a virtuous wife, and an infant son, must be maintained, even though doing an hundred times that which ought not

How enforced.

(*e*) Mitāksharā, ii. 10, § 1; Dāya Bhāga, v. § 11, 12; D. K. S. iii. § 14—16; V. May., iv. 11, § 10.

(*f*) Mitāksharā, ii. 1, § 28; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 48; V. May., iv. 8, § 5; 1 Stra. H. L. 174; 2 W. MacN. 119; 1 W. & B. 92; *Khemkor v. Umia Shunker*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 381; *Vrandavandas v. Yamunabai*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 229.

(*g*) *Sikki v. Venkatasawmy*, 8 Mad. H. C. 144.

(*h*) "Let them allow a maintenance to his women for life, provided these preserve unsullied the bed of their lords. But if they behave otherwise, the brethren may resume that allowance" (Nārada, xiii. § 26). This text is said by Jīmūta Vāhana to apply to women actually espoused who have not the rank of wives, but another passage of Nārada (cited Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 1, § 34) is open to no such objection. "Whichever wife (*patnī*) becomes a widow and continues virtuous, she is entitled to be provided with food and raiment." See too Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 1, § 47; 2 W. MacN. 112; *Muttammall v. Kamashy*, 2 Mad. H. C. 337; *per curiam*, 4 Mad. H. C. 185; 13 B. L. R. 72, 88. But see *Honamma v. Timmannabhat*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 559, where it was held that subsequent unchastity did not deprive a widow of a mere starving maintenance awarded by decree; *post*, § 380.

(*i*) 2 W. MacN. 113, 118; 1 W. & B. 21, 26—28; *per Norman, J.*, 10 W. R. F. B. 93; *Coopammall v. Rookmany*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 238. *Per curiam*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 597.

(*k*) 2 W. MacN. 118; 1 W. & B. 93.

Nature and
extent of obliga-
tion.

to be done" (l). So the Mitâksharâ lays down that "Where there may be no property but what has been self-acquired, the only persons whose maintenance out of such property is imperative are aged parents, wife, and minor children" (m). The Smṛiti Chandrikâ also expressly states that the obligation to maintain widows is dependent on taking the property of the deceased (n). This rule is followed in Madras, where suits for maintenance have been dismissed when brought by a widow against her brothers-in-law, who held no ancestral property, or where the only property out of which maintenance could be given was a salary (o). So it has been held in Bengal that the widow of a separated brother is not entitled to be maintained by the family of her father-in-law, and the same opinion was given by the Bombay High Court, in a case where a deserted wife claimed maintenance from her husband's brothers. Their liability was stated to depend upon their having in their hands any of her husband's property (p). The point was so decided in the original Court, but left undecided by the Madras High Court in a later case, where a widow claimed maintenance in the family of her father-in-law (q). In a recent case under the Mitâksharâ law in Bengal, Kemp, J., said, "The question to be decided is, whether the father and son were joint in estate, and whether any joint estate was left which was burthened with the payment of proper maintenance to the plaintiff, the defendant's daughter-in-law" (r). The question was recently examined with great fulness and care by the Courts of the N. W. Provinces and of Bengal. In the former the widow of a deceased member of a joint family claimed maintenance from her father-in-law and brothers-in-

(l) 3 Dig. 406. The last clause is cited in another chapter as meaning that these relations must be maintained even by crime. See *per curiam*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 597.

(m) Mitâksharâ on Subtraction of Gift, cited Stra. Man. § 209.

(n) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 1, § 34. "In order to maintain the widow the elder brother or any of the others above mentioned must have taken the property of the deceased; the duty of maintaining the widow being dependent on taking the property."

(o) *Vudda Balaram v. Venkumma*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 225; Mad. Dec. of 1859, 5, 265, 272.

(p) *Kumulmoney v. Bodhnarain*, 2 W. MacN. 119; *Ramabai v. Trimbak Ganesh*, 9 Bomb. H. C. 283.

(q) *Visalatchy v. Annasawmy*, 5 Mad. H. C. 150.

(r) *Mt. Hema Kooeree v. Ajoodhya Pershad*, 24 W. R. 474.

law. There was admittedly joint ancestral property, but it was contended that the widow could only be maintained out of her husband's property, and that he left none, his interest in it passing to his coparceners. The Court affirmed her claim. They rested it on the ground that the share which her husband had in the property had passed to the defendants, that she could not be in a worse position than the wife of a disqualified heir, who would be admittedly entitled to maintenance; that she might be looked upon as one who, though interested in the property, was disqualified from inheriting it by sex; and that where her husband had an interest in property, out of which she would be maintained during his life, the obligation to maintain her out of that property continued after his death, whether it passed by inheritance or by survivorship (s). It will be observed that it was assumed that there would have been no such obligation if there had been no joint property, or if it had not passed into the hands of the defendants, and the judgments relied much on the passage in the *Smṛiti Chandrikâ* (xi. 1, § 34), in which this rule is laid down.

Widow of deceased coparcener.

§ 376. The Bengal decision was given on appeal from a judgment of a Full Bench under the following circumstances (t): The plaintiff was the widow of the defendant's son. There was no joint family property, and the son left no property of his own. The only property possessed by the father-in-law was a monthly pension. After her husband's death, the widow went to reside in her own father's house. The suit was brought by her to have a fixed money payment made to her. It was admitted that the defendant was willing to support her in his own house, and that she had not been driven from his house by any ill-treatment. It was held by eleven out of thirteen Judges (*diss.* Loch and Kemp, JJ.) that her claim could not be supported. For the purposes of this ruling, however, it was not necessary to decide whether the father-in-law was under an obligation to give his daughter-in-law lodging, food and raiment. It was only necessary to decide that where she practically refused to

Not entitled to independent allowance,

(s) *Mt. Lalti Kuar v. Ganga Bishan*, 7 N. W. P., H. C. 261.

(t) *Khetramani Dasi v. Kashinath Das*, 2 B. L. R., A. C. 15.

where no
property.

Whether main-
tenance of
widow depends
on possession
of property.

accept these, she was not entitled to a fixed monthly allowance. It was admitted by all the Judges that where a person took property, either by inheritance or survivorship, he would be legally bound to maintain those whose maintenance was a charge upon it in the hands of the last holder. But where there was no such property, Peacock, C. J., Macpherson, Bayley, Glover, JJ., were of opinion that there was no legal obligation whatever to maintain the daughter at law, and that the precepts which seemed to enjoin upon relations the duty of maintaining the widows of deceased members were of merely moral obligation. On the other hand, several of the other Judges stated that they offered no opinion as to the right of a dependent widow to receive necessary subsistence in the house of the head of the family. If he allowed her to continue in his house as a member of the family, and if she were an infant, or otherwise unable to maintain herself, it was intimated by Norman, J., that such a state of things would carry with it a legal obligation on the part of the father-in-law, who had taken upon himself the care of her person, and the charge of entertaining her as a member of his family, and on whose protection she was dependent, to provide her with food and the actual necessities of life. But the Civil Courts would have no jurisdiction to interfere with his discretion in determining the manner in which this obligation should be discharged (*u*).

Bombay.

§ 377. In Bombay, it was formerly laid down that where a widow of one of the near members of the family, such as a father, son, or brother, is actually destitute, she has a legal right to be maintained by the other members, even though they were separated from her late husband, and possess no assets upon which he or she ever had a claim (*x*). These cases were, however, examined and overruled in a later decision, in which a widow, who was living apart from her husband's family, sued his paternal uncle, the nearest surviving male relation of her husband, for a money allowance as maintenance. The Court after an exhaustive

(*u*) 2 B. L. R., A. C. p. 48.

(*x*) *Bae Lukmee v. Lukmeedas*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 13; *Chandrabahagabai v. Kashinath*, 2 Bomb. 341; *Timmappa v. Parmeshriamma*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 130; *Udaram v. Sonkaboi*, 10 Bomb. 384.

review of the whole law upon the subject held that the suit must fail for two reasons, either of which would be fatal to her claim; first, that the defendant was separated in estate from the plaintiff's husband at the time of his death; and secondly, that at the institution of the suit there was not in the possession or subject to the disposition of the defendant, any ancestral estate, or estate of the plaintiff's husband or of his father (y).

§ 378. The obligation to maintain a son appears to be limited to the cases of his being an infant (z), in which case the law of every nation imposes an obligation upon the parent to maintain him, or of his being a co-sharer in the property of which his father is the manager. The mere relationship of father and son imposes no such obligation, where the son has reached an age at which he can support himself. Whether the case might be different if a permanent incapacity to support himself were made out is not clear. A temporary incapacity would certainly entail no such duty (a). Where, however, the whole of the family property is impartible, and subject to the law of primogeniture, an adult son is entitled to maintenance, since this is the only mode in which he can obtain any benefit from the ancestral estate (b).

Rights of son.

§ 379. The maintenance of a wife by her husband is of course a matter of personal obligation, arising from the very existence of the relation, and independent of the possession of any property (c). And this obligation attaches from the moment of marriage. Where the wife is immature it is the custom that she should reside with her parents, and they maintain her as a matter of affection, but not of obligation. If from inability, unwillingness, or any other cause, they choose to demand her maintenance from her husband, he is bound to pay it (d). And, conversely, her husband is alone

Wife to be maintained by husbands.

(y) *Savitri Bai v. Luxmibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R., 573; *Apaji v. Gungabai*, ib. 632.

(z) *Ante*, § 375.

(a) *Premchund v. Hulaschund*, 4 B. L. R. Appx. 23. So as to grandson, *Mon Mohinee v. Baluck Chunder*, 15 W. R. 498; or adult illegitimate son, *Nilmoney v. Baneshur*, 4 Calc. 91.

(b) *Himmat Sing v. Ganpat Sing*, 12 Bomb. H. C. 194, *Ramchandra v. Sakharan*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 346, post § 382.

(c) *Ante*, § 375.

(d) *Ramien v. Condummal*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 154.

liable. No other member of the family, whether joint or separate, can properly be made a party to the suit, unless, perhaps, in cases where he has abandoned her, and his property is in the possession of some other relation (e).

Bound to reside
with him.

Wife leaving her
home.

§ 380. As soon as the wife is mature, her home is necessarily in her husband's house. He is bound to maintain her in it while she is willing to reside with him, and to perform her duties. If she quits him of her own accord, either without cause, or on account of such ordinary quarrels as are incidental to married life in general, she can set up no claim to a separate maintenance (f). Nothing will justify her in leaving her home except such violence as renders it unsafe for her to continue there, or such continued ill-usage as would be termed cruelty in an English matrimonial Court (g). For instance, where a Hindu husband kept a Mahomedan woman, the Court considered that this was such conduct as rendered it impossible for the wife to live with him any longer, consistently with her self-respect and religious feelings (h). But I doubt whether the same rule would be applied to the mere keeping of a concubine, which is a matter of familiar usage among Hindus, especially of the higher ranks (i). And the circumstance of a man's taking another wife, even without any of the reasons which are stated as justifying such a course (j), does not entitle a wife to leave her home, so long as her husband is willing to keep her there (k). For such a step on his part is one of the incidents of Hindu married life. Of course a wife who leaves her home for purposes of adultery cannot claim to

When unchaste.

(e) *Iyagaree Subaroydoo v. I. Sashamma*, Mad. Dec. of 1856, 22; *Rangaiyan v. Kaliyani*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 86; *Gudimella v. Venkamma*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 12; *Ramabai v. Trimbak Ganesh*, 9 Bomb. 283.

(f) 2 W. MacN. 109; *Kullyanessura v. Dwarkanath Surma*, 6 W. R. 116; *Sidlingapa v. Sidava*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 634.

(g) *Pudmanabiah v. Moonemah*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 138; *Vejaya Oppilla-thah v. Anjalammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 223.

(h) *Lalla Gobind v. Dowlut Buttee*, 14 W. R. 451. As to cases where either party becomes a convert and is therefore repudiated by the other, see Act XXI of 1866.

(i) Yājñavalkya says (V. May., xx. § 2), "Let the bidding of their husbands be performed by wives; this is the chief duty of a woman. Even if he be accused of deadly sin, yet let her wait until he be purified from it."

(j) See as to these, Manu, ix. § 77-82.

(k) Manu, ix. § 83; *Viraswami v. Appasawmy Chetty*, 1 Mad. II. C. 375; *Rajah Row Boochee v. S. R. R. Venkata Neeladry*, 1 M. Dec. 366.

be maintained out of it, nor to be taken back (*l*). Whether an unchaste wife can be turned out of doors by her husband without any provision whatever seems unsettled. It is stated generally that an unchaste woman may be turned out of doors without any maintenance (*m*). But the passages upon which this *dictum* rests refer to the maintenance either of the wives of disqualified heirs, or of the widows of deceased coparceners (*n*). It appears pretty certain that no one except her husband is bound to keep an unchaste woman alive. But there are contradictory opinions as to whether her husband is not liable to furnish her with a bare subsistence. The obligation, if it exists, is dependent on the woman abandoning her course of vice (*o*). Where a decree has been given awarding a bare maintenance to a woman, it has been held that she does not forfeit it by subsequent unchastity. Though it might be different if the maintenance awarded were on the full scale (*p*).

When a wife leaves her husband's home by his consent, he is of course bound to receive her again when she is desirous to return, and if he refuses to do so, she will be entitled to maintenance just as if he had turned her out (*q*).

For a lawful purpose.

A wife who is unlawfully excluded from her own home, or refused proper maintenance in it, has the same right to pledge her husband's credit, as a wife in England. But the *onus* lies heavily on those who deal with her to establish that she is in such a position (*r*).

§ 381. The same reasons which require a wife to remain under her husband's roof do not apply where she has become a widow. No doubt the family house of her husband's relations is a proper, but not necessarily the most proper, place for her continued residence (*s*). Where she is young,

Widow not bound to reside with husband's family.

(*l*) 2 W. MacN. 109; *Ilata Shavatri v. I. Narayanan*, 1 Mad. H. C. 372.

(*m*) V. May., iv. 11, § 12; *Smṛiti Chandrikā* v. § 43.

(*n*) See *Nārada*, xiii. § 25, 26; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 1, § 7.

(*o*) *Bussunt Koomaree v. Kummul Koomaree*, 7 S. D. 144 (168); 1 Stra. H. L. 172; 2 Stra. H. L. 39, 309; Stra. Man. § 206. And consider remarks of H. Ct. 1 Bomb. L. R. 560. See texts, 2 Dig. 422—425; *Nārada*, xii. § 91; *Yājñavalkya*, i. § 70.

(*p*) *Honamma v. Timmanna Bhat*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 559. But see *per curiam*, 4 Mad. H. C. 185.

(*q*) *Nitye Laha v. Soonduree Dossee*, 9 W. R. 475.

(*r*) *Viraswami Chetty v. Appasawmy*, 1 Mad. H. C. 375.

(*s*) 2 Dig. 450.

Widow residing
apart.

and is surrounded by young men, it may even be more prudent and decorous for her to return to her father's care, and it may, under many circumstances, be not only a safer but a happier home. At all events it is now settled by decisions of the highest tribunal that "all that is required of her is, that she is not to leave her husband's house for improper or unchaste purposes, and she is entitled to retain her maintenance, unless she is guilty of unchastity, or other disreputable practices, after she leaves that residence" (t). It does not, however, follow, that the right to choose a separate residence and a money maintenance rests absolutely with the widow, merely for her own pleasure. The Bombay High Court, after a review of all the previous decisions, appears to be of opinion that the Courts have a discretion, "which should be exercised so as not to throw upon the deceased husband's family a needless or oppressive burden at the caprice of the widow or her family." They cited with approval, as containing the true principle of law, the statement by Colebrooke (2 Stra. H. L. 401) "She does not lose her right of maintenance by visiting her own relations; but a widow is not entirely her own mistress, being subject to the control of her husband's family, who might require her to return to live in her husband's house (u)." If the husband chose by his will to make it a condition, that his widow should reside in his family house, such a direction would be binding, and the continuance of her maintenance would depend upon her obedience (v). A widow cannot insist on residing in any particular house. If she elects to live with her husband's family, she must accept such arrangements for her residence as they make for her (x). In Madras it has been laid down that a widow who, without any special cause, elects to live away from her husband's relations, is not entitled to as liberal an allowance as she

(t) *Pirthee Singh v. Rani Rajkooer*, 12 B. L. R., P. C. 238, where most of the previous cases are cited; *Visalatchi v. Annasawmy*, 5 Mad. H. C. 150; *Kasfurbai v. Shivajiram*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 372, dissenting from *Rungo Vinayek v. Yamunabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 44.

(u) *Rungo Vinayek v. Yamunabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 44.

(v) *Bamasunderi v. Paddomonee*, S. D. of 1859, 457; *Cunjhunnee Dossee v. Gopee Mohun*, F. MacN. 62; *per curiam*, 12 B. L. R. 247.

(x) *Mohun Geer v. Mt. Tota*, 4 N. W. P. H. C. 153.

would be if, from any fault of theirs, she was unable to live with them (*y*). But I imagine that her election to live apart from them, cannot be visited with anything in the way of a penalty, or forfeiture of her proper rights (*z*).

§ 382. A female heir is exactly under the same obligations to maintain dependent members of the family as a male heir would have been under by virtue of succeeding to the same estate (*a*). The obligation even extends to the King when he takes the estate by escheat or by forfeiture (*b*). And where the claim to maintenance is based upon the possession of family property, it equally exists though the property is impartible, as being in the nature of a Râj, or a Zemin-dary in Southern India (*c*). In Bombay it has been held that where a member of an ordinary undivided Hindu family is in a position to sue for a share of the property, he cannot sue for maintenance (*d*). But it is difficult to see why a coparcener, who is willing to continue as a member of an undivided family, should be driven out of it by what must be wrongful conduct on the part of the manager, in refusing him his proper support out of the family funds. Such suits are, of course, very rare, as maintenance would never be refused to a coparcener unless his right as such was denied, in which case he would naturally test his right by suing for a partition.

All heirs bound.

Right of co-
parcener to sue.

§ 383. In cases where a man forsakes his wife without any fault on her part, it is said that he is bound to give her one-third of his property, provided that would be sufficient for her maintenance (*e*). In other cases no rule is or can be laid down as to the amount which ought to be awarded. In any particular instance the first question would be, what would be the fair wants of a person in the position and rank of life of the claimant. The wealth of the family would be a proper element in determining this question. A member of

Amount.

(*y*) *Anantaiya v. Savitramma*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 59.

(*z*) See cases cited, note (*s*); *Nittokishoree v. Jogendro*, 5 I. A. 55.

(*a*) *Gunga v. Jeevee*, 1 Bor. 384; 3 Dig. 460.

(*b*) *Nârada*, xiii. § 52; *Mt. Golab Koonwur v. Collector of Benares*, 4 M. I. A. 246.

(*c*) *Muttusawmy v. Venkataswara*, 12 M. I. A. 203; *Katchekaleyana v. Katchivijaya*, ib. 495, ante, § 378.

(*d*) 12 Bomb. H. C. 96, note.

(*e*) *V. May*, xx. § 1; 1 Bor. 63; *Ramabai v. Trimbak Ganesh*, 9 Bomb. 283.

How deter-
mined.

a family who had been brought up in affluence would naturally have more numerous and more expensive wants than one who had been brought up in poverty. The extent of the property would be material in deciding whether these wants could be provided for, consistently with justice to the other members. The extent of the property is not, however, a criterion of the sufficiency of the maintenance, in the sense that any ratio had existed between one and the other. Otherwise, as the Judicial Committee remarked (*f*), "a son not provided for might compel a frugal father, who had acquired large means by his own exertions, to allow a larger maintenance than he himself was satisfied to live upon, and than children living as part of his family must be content with." Every case must be determined upon its own peculiar facts. As regards widows, since they are only entitled to be maintained by persons who hold assets over which their deceased husbands had a claim, (§ 375—377) the High Court of Bombay has ruled that it follows as a corollary, "that the widow is not, at the utmost, entitled to a larger portion of the annual produce of the family property than the annual proceeds of the share to which her husband would have been entitled on partition were he now living" (*g*). The Bombay High Court has lately ruled that even without a precedent demand, a widow may recover arrears of maintenance for any period, subject to the operation of the law of limitation. That is to say, that a demand and refusal may limit her right to arrears, but is not required to create it. (*Jivi v. Ramji*, 3 Bomb. L. R., 207.)

Where widow
has property.

In calculating the amount of maintenance to be awarded to a female, her own *strīdhana* is not to be taken into account, if it is of an unproductive character, such as clothes and jewels. For she has a right to retain these, and also to be supported, if necessary, by her husband's family. But if her property produces an income, this is to be taken into consideration. For her right is to be maintained, and so far as she is already maintained out of her own property, that

(*f*) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 9 B. L. R. p. 413; *Bhugwan Chunder v. Bindoo Bashinee*, 6 W. R. 286; *Nittokishoree v. Jojendro*, 5 I. A. 55.

(*g*) *Madhavrav v. Gangabai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 639.

right is satisfied (*h*). And it would seem that a member of the family, who has once received a sufficient allotment for maintenance, and who has dissipated it, cannot bring a suit either for a money allowance, or for subsistence out of the family property (*i*). On the other hand an allowance fixed in reference to a particular state of the family property may be diminished by order of the Court if the assets are afterwards reduced (*j*). And on the same principle no doubt the allowance might be raised, if the property increased.

Arrears of maintenance used to be refused by the Madras Arrears. Sudder Court. But this view has now been overruled, and it is settled that such arrears may be awarded, at all events from the date of demand (*k*). Such an award is, however, at the discretion of the Court, and arrears may properly be refused where a widow has chosen to live apart from her husband's relations without any sufficient cause, and has then sued not only for a declaration of her right to future maintenance, but for a lump sum as arrears for the period during which she resided with her own family (*l*).

§ 384. Another question is, whether the claim for maintenance is merely a liability which ought, in the first place, to be satisfied out of the family property, or whether it is an actual charge upon that property, which binds it in the hands of the holders of the property. How far a charge upon the property.

There are several texts which prohibit the gift of property to such an extent as to deprive a man's family of the means of subsistence. Vrihaspati says (*m*), "A man may give what remains after the food and clothing of his family, the giver of more (who leaves his family naked and unfed) may taste honey at first, but shall afterwards find it poison. If

(*h*) 1 Stra. H. L. 171; 2 Stra. H. L. 307; *Shib Dayee v. Doorga Pershad*, 4 N. W. P. 63; *Chandrabhaghabai v. Kashinath*, 2 Bomb. 341, *per curiam*, 2 Bomb. L. R. at p. 584. See however W. & B. 92, where it is said that in estimating a widow's share, it is to be equal to that of a son, deducting any *strīdhana* she may have received.

(*i*) *Sivatri Bai v. Luxmibai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 573.

(*j*) *Ruka Bai v. Gandabai*, 1 All. 594.

(*k*) *Venkopadhyaya v. Kaveri Hengusu*, 2 Mad. H. C. 36; *Sakwarbai v. Bhavanjee*, 1 Bomb. 194; *Abalady v. Mt. Lukhymonee*, 2 Wym. 49; *Pirthee Singh v. Rane Raj Kooer*, 2 N. W. P. 170; affirmed 12 B. L. R., P. C. 238; *Jadumani Dasi v. Kheytra Mohun Shil*, V. Darp. 384.

(*l*) *Rango Vinayek v. Yamunabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 44.

(*m*) 2 Dig. 131.

How far a charge upon the property.

what is acquired by marriage, what has descended from an ancestor, or what has been gained by valour, be given with the assent of the wife, or the co-heirs, or of the King, the gift is valid." "Kátyâyana declares what may and may not be given. Except his whole estate and his dwelling-house, what remains after the food and clothing of his family a man may give away, whatever it be (whether fixed or movable); otherwise it may not be given" (n). Vyâsa says (o), "They who are born and they who are yet unborn, and they who are actually in the womb, all require the means of support, and the dissipation of their hereditary maintenance is censured." So a passage ascribed to Manu (p) declares, "The support of persons who should be maintained is the approved means of attaining heaven. But hell is the man's portion if they suffer. Therefore let a master of a family carefully maintain them." This Jímûta Vâhana explains by saying, "The prohibition is not against a donation or other transfer of a small part not incompatible with the support of the family."

Upon these passages, however, it is to be observed: First, that they all refer to cases of gift or dissipation, where no consideration exists for the transfer. The same prohibition would not apply to a sale, either for a family necessity, or for value, where the purchase-money would take the place of that which was disposed of. Secondly, the penalties suggested seem to be rather of a religious nature, punishing the act, than of a civil nature, invalidating it. Thirdly, the very authors who cite these texts treat them as merely moral prohibitions, and Jagannâtha points out, acutely enough, as to one text, that the gift cannot be invalid, if the immediate result of it is to taste as honey in the mouth of the donor (q).

§ 385. The question has arisen frequently for decision within the last few years, though it can hardly be said that every point that can be suggested is now settled. It seems to be now settled that the claim even of a widow for main-

(n) 2 Dig. 133; 3 Dig. 581.

(o) Dâya Bhâga, i. § 45.

(p) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 23, 24, not to be found in the Institutes.

(q) 2 Dig. 132; Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 28.

tenance is not such a lien upon the estate as binds it in the hands of a *bonâ fide* purchaser for value without notice of the claim (r). As Phear, J., said (s), "When the property passes into the hands of a *bonâ fide* purchaser without notice, it cannot be affected by anything short of an existing proprietary right; it cannot be subject to that which is not already a specific charge, or which does not contain all the elements necessary to its ripening into a specific charge. And obviously, the consideration received by the heir for the sale of the deceased's property will, so far as the widow's right of recourse to it is concerned, take the place of the property sold." It was also pointed out by the Bombay High Court (t) that the texts which are relied on as making the maintenance a charge upon the inheritance are exactly similar to those which charge it with the payment of debts, the expenses of marriage and funeral ceremonies, and the charges of initiation of younger members. But these charges would admittedly not be payable by a purchaser for value, whether with or without notice of their existence. They also pointed out that such a doctrine would equally invalidate a sale made by the husband himself, as a wife's maintenance is even a stronger obligation than that of maintaining a widow. In fact the Madras Sudr Court did carry out the principle to that full extent, by holding that a sale of property made by a husband was invalid, where nothing was left for the maintenance of his wife (u).

Does not bind purchaser without notice.

§ 386. Supposing this to be established, it would follow that the purchaser must have notice, not merely of the existence of a right to maintenance—that is, of the existence of persons who did or might require to be maintained—but of the existence of a charge actually created and binding the estate. Otherwise it is evident that an estate never could be purchased as long as there was any person living whose maintenance was or might become a charge upon

Where right has become fixed.

(r) *Srimati Bhagabati v. Kanailal Mitter*, 8 B. L. R. 225; *Adhiranee Narain v. Shona Mallee*, 1 Calc. 365; *Lakshman Ramchandra v. Sarasvati Bai*, 12 Bomb. 69; *Lakshman Ramchandra v. Satiyabhamabai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 494.

(s) 8 B. L. R. 229.

(t) 12 Bomb. p. 77.

(u) *Lachana v. Bapanamma*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 230.

the property. A decree actually settling the amount of maintenance, and making it a lien upon the property, would of course be a valid charge; but not, apparently, a merely personal decree against the holder of the property (*v*). So if the property was bequeathed by will, and the widow's maintenance was fixed and charged upon the estate by the same will (*x*); or if by an agreement between the widow and the holder of the estate, her maintenance was settled and made payable out of the estate (*y*), a purchaser taking with notice of the charge would be bound to satisfy it. And the charge, where it exists, is a charge upon every part of the property, and may be made the ground of a suit against any one who holds any part of it (*z*). In a case already quoted, Phear, J., seemed to think that notice of a widow having set up a claim for maintenance against the heir would be sufficient (*a*). But if nothing binds the estate except a charge, actually created, it is difficult to see how a purchaser could be affected by notice that a widow had a claim which had not matured into a lien. And in a later case Couch, C. J., said, "Whatever may be the rights of the younger members of a family, where the estate is inherited by the eldest member, until the maintenance has become a specific charge upon the property, which it might be by a decree of a Court making provision for the payment of the maintenance, and declaring that a part of the property should be a security for it, or by a contract between the parties charging the property with a certain sum for maintenance, we do not see how it can be a charge upon the estate in the hands of a *bonâ fide* purchaser for consideration" (*b*). In a case in which the Crown had confiscated

Effect of notice.

(*v*) *Per West, J.*, 2 Bomb. L. R. p. 524. *Adhiranee Narain v. Shona Malee*, 1 Cal. 365.

(*x*) *Prosunno Coomar v. Barbosa*, 6 W. R. 253.

(*y*) *Heera Lall v. Mt. Kousillah*, 2 Agra, 42. See this case explained, 12 Bomb. 75; *Abodi Begam v. Asa Ram*, 2 All. 162.

(*z*) *Ramchandra Dikshit v. Savitribai*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 73. See it explained, 9 B. L. R. 27; 12 Bomb. 73. If the holder of part of the property pays the whole maintenance, his remedy is by a suit for contribution, 4 Bomb. A. C. 73.

(*a*) 8 B. L. R. p. 229. *West, J.*, says "We should rather substitute 'notice of the existence of a claim likely to be unjustly impaired by the proposed transaction,' 2 Bomb. L. R. p. 5, 7.

(*b*) *Juggernath Savunt v. Maharanee Odhiranee Narain*, 20 W. R. 126. See *Goluck Chunder v. Ohilla Dayee*, 25 W. R. 100.

property out of which a widow was being maintained, it does not appear that any charge in the above sense had ever been created. But the decree affirming the maintenance against the Crown was submitted to without opposition (c). Escheat.

§ 386A. The whole of this subject was lately examined by West, J., in Bombay, in a judgment which collects all the authorities bearing upon the matter. He points out that mere notice of a claim for maintenance, which contains all the elements necessary for its ripening into a specific charge, cannot be sufficient to bind a purchaser, because in the case of a widow under Mitâksharâ law, her claim would always contain such elements. Nor could the rights of the purchaser depend solely upon the question, whether after the sale there was enough property left in the hands of the heir to satisfy her claim. What was honestly purchased was free from her claim for ever, and no new right could spring up in the widow by virtue of any subsequent exhaustion of the family funds. His view apparently is, that the question will always be, first, was the vendor acting in fraud of the widow's claim to maintenance; secondly, was the purchaser acting with notice, not merely of her claim but, of the fraud which was being practised upon her claim. He says "If the heir sought to defraud her, he could not by any device in the way of parting with the estate, or changing its form, get rid of the liability which had come to him along with the advantage derived from his survivorship; and the purchaser—taking from him with reason to suppose that the transaction was one originating not in an honest desire to pay off debts, or satisfy claims for which the estate was justly liable, and which it could not otherwise well meet, but in a desire to shuffle off a moral and legal liability,—would, as sharing in the proposed fraud, be prevented from gaining by it; but if, though he knew of the widow's existence and her claim, he bought upon a rational and honest opinion that the sale was one that could be effected without any furtherance of wrong, he has, as against the plaintiff, acquired a title free from the claim

(c) *Mt. Golab Koonwar v. Collector of Benares*, 4 M. I. A. 246. See 1 Calc. 373.

which still subsists in full force as against the recipient of the purchase money" (d).

Priority of debts.

§ 387. Debts contracted by a Hindu take precedence over maintenance as a charge upon the estate. Therefore, a purchaser of property sold to discharge debts has a better title than a widow who seeks to charge the estate with her maintenance. And this would be especially so where the property has been acquired in trade, and is held for trading purposes, and seized for the trading debts (e). But, I presume, a charge actually and *bonâ fide* created before sale or seizure would take precedence over them. Where a husband under Mitâksharâ law dies leaving separate property and also joint property, which passes to his coparceners, the widow's claim to maintenance must be met first out of the separate estate, and she cannot come upon the joint property till the separate property is proved insufficient (f). Where there is family property which has been partly alienated, it does not appear to be settled whether the widow is bound to sue those of the family who are still in possession of the remainder of the property before she comes upon the purchasers (g).

Property liable.

Widow's claim on family house.

§ 388. It has been laid down that there is a distinction between the right of a widow to continue to live in the ancestral family house, and her right over other parts of the property. Accordingly, where a man died leaving a widow and a son, and the son immediately on his coming of age sold the family house, and the purchaser proceeded to evict the widow, the High Court of Bengal dismissed his suit. Peacock, C. J., held that the text of Kâtyâyana (h) was restrictive and not merely directory. That the son could not turn his father's widow out of the family dwelling house himself, or authorize a purchaser to do so, at all events until he had provided for her some other suitable resi-

(d) *Lakshman Ramchandra v. Satyabhamabai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 494, 524.

(e) *Adhiranee Narain v. Shona Malee*, 1 Calc. 365; *Johurra Bibee v. Sree Gopal Misser*, ib. 470; *Lakshman v. Satyabhamabai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 494.

(f) *Shib Dayee v. Doorga Pershad*, 4 N. W. P. 63.

(g) See *Goluck Chunder v. Ohilla Dayee*, 25 W. R. 100; *Adhiranee Narain v. Shona Malee*, 1 Calc. 365; *Ram Churun Tewaree v. Mt. Jasooda*, 2 Agra H. C. 134. Doubted *per curiam*, 12 Bomb. 76.

(h) 2 Dig. 133 ante, § 384.

dence (i). And the same has been held in the N. W. Provinces, where the son of the survivor of two brothers sold the dwelling house, in part of which the widow of his uncle was living. The Court held that she could not be ousted by the purchaser of her nephew's rights (j). Where, however, a Hindu mortgaged his ancestral dwelling house, and then died, and his mother and widow were made parties to a suit to enforce the mortgage, the Court held, that the fact that they were dwelling in the house was no objection to a decree for its sale. They appear to have left it an open question whether the purchaser at the sale would be entitled to turn them out of possession. (*Bhigam Das v. Pura*, 2 All. 141).

Right of widow to family house.

§ 389. So far we have been discussing the case of a purchaser for value. Phear, J., in the judgment so often referred to, said, "As against one who has taken the property as heir, the widow has a right to have a proper sum for her maintenance ascertained and made a charge upon the property in his hands. She may also doubtless follow the property for this purpose into the hands of any one who takes it as a volunteer, or with notice of her having set up a claim for maintenance against the heir" (k). I am not aware of any case in which a claim for maintenance has been set up against the donee of property; but the point has arisen several times with regard to a devisee, who is of course in the same position. In Madras, where a testator devised all his property by will, without making any provision for his widow, the will was held valid, except as to her claim for maintenance, and a reference was directed to ascertain what amount should be set aside for that purpose (l). And so in Bengal, Sir F. MacNaghten, while admitting that a husband can, by will, deprive his widow of her share in the estate, adds, "It cannot be doubted but that her right to maintenance remains in full force—and, if it had been asked for on reasonable grounds, I take for

Against volunteer in possession of property.

(i) *Mangala Debi v. Dinanath Bose*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 72.

(j) *Gauri v. Chandramani*, 1 All. 262.

(k) 8 B. L. R. 228.

(l) S. A. 634 of 1871, per *Morgan*, C. J., and *Holloway*, J., 8 Mar. 1872, not reported. Acc. *Razabai v. Sadu*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 98.

granted that the Court would in this case (as it had in a similar one) have ordered funds sufficient for the purpose of maintaining her, to be set apart out of the whole of her husband's estate"(m). This view was followed by the Supreme Court in a later case, where a Hindu in Bengal left all his property to his three sons, not mentioning his widow. A decree was made for partition in three equal shares between them. The Court held the decree erroneous, as it ought to have awarded a share to the mother for her maintenance. Grant, J., said, "Her legal right was not excluded by her husband's will, since her name was not mentioned in his will, and rights so much the favoured object of the Hindu law as that of a widow to maintenance could not be excluded by implication. And so, we are informed by Sir F. MacNaghten, the Court thought, and, if not excluded, they must have subsisted such as the law declared them" (n). And, I imagine, the ruling would be the same even though the testator expressly, and by name, declared that his widow or daughter should not receive maintenance. It has no doubt been decided that a father in Bengal may by will deprive his son of any right to maintenance (o). But that is because an adult son has no right whatever to maintenance (p). His only right is as an heir expectant, and that right may be wholly defeated by sale, gift, or devise. But the right of a widow to her maintenance arises by marriage, and that of a daughter by birth; it exists during the life of the father, and continues after his death. It is a legal obligation attaching upon himself personally, and upon his property. He cannot free himself from it during his lifetime, and it attaches upon the inheritance immediately after his death. It seems, therefore, contrary to principle to hold that by devising the property to another, he could authorize that other to hold it free from claims which neither he himself nor his heir could have resisted (q).

(m) F. MacN. 92.

(n) *Comulmonee Dossee v. Ramnath Bysack*, Fulton, 189.

(o) *Tagore v. Tagore*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 132, 159.

(p) See *ante*, § 375, 378.

(q) See *Bhoobunmoyee v. Ramkisshore*, S. D. of 1860, i. p. 489, where the Court said, "In Bengal a widow has no indefeasible vested right in the property left by her husband, though she has by virtue of her marriage a right, if

§ 390. As a general rule, property allotted for maintenance is resumable at the death of the grantee, the presumption being that the income only was granted, and not the body of the fund (*r*). But of course there is nothing to prevent an owner making over a sum of money or landed property absolutely, in full discharge of all claims for maintenance. And a grant so made would be absolutely at the disposal of the person to whom it was given (*s*). The validity of such a grant would depend upon the capacity of the person who made it.

Maintenance for life.

all the property be willed away, to maintenance." See also *Sonatun Bysack v. Sreemutty Juggutsoonderee*, 8 M. I. A. 66. The side note there is erroneous. What the widow claimed and obtained was her share, and not merely maintenance.

(*r*) *Woodoyaditto v. Mukoona Narain*, 22 W. R. 225.

(*s*) *Nursing Deb v. Roy Koylasnath*, 9 M. I. A. 55.

CHAPTER XV.

PARTITION.

Division of
subject.

§ 391. I HAVE already (§ 215-223) discussed the early history of the law of partition. The modern law may be divided into four heads. First, the property to be divided; secondly, the persons who are to share (§ 395); thirdly, the mode of division (§ 412); fourthly, what constitutes a partition (§ 418). A few words will have to be added on the subject of re-union. In treating of THE JOINT FAMILY (Chapter VIII.), I have anticipated much that is usually placed under the Law of Partition.

Coparcenary
property alone
divisible.

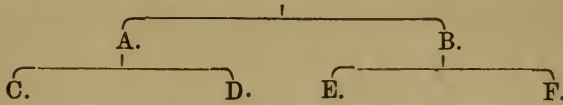
FIRST.—The property to be divided is *ex vi termini* the property which has been previously held as joint property in coparcenary (*a*). Therefore a man's self-acquisition is indivisible (*b*), and so is any property which he has inherited collaterally, or from such a source that the persons claiming a share obtained no interest in it on its devolution to him (§ 248). Property allotted on a previous partition is of course indivisible as between the separated members or their representatives; but it would be divisible as between those members and their own descendants, unless at the time of partition the father had cut himself off from his own issue, as well as from his collateral relations (249). And as soon as such property has descended a step, it loses its character of impartibility, and becomes ancestral and joint

(*a*) As to what is coparcenary property, see *ante*, § 248, *et seq.*

(*b*) *Mitāksharā*, i. 4; *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 1; V. May., iv. 7. But in Bengal, where a division is made in the life of the father, the father has a moiety of the goods acquired by his son at the charge of the estate; the son who made the acquisition has two shares, and the rest take one apiece. But if the father's estate has not been used, he has two shares, the acquirer as many, and the rest are excluded from participation. *Dāya Bhāga*, ii. § 72; *per Peacock*, C. J., 2 B. L. R., A. C. 287.

property in the hands of those who take it. It retains its original character as regards collaterals. For instance, if A. and B. are undivided brothers, and A. makes a separate

Coparcenary property is divisible.



acquisition, it descends to his two sons exclusively. In their hands it is ancestral property, and divisible. But it does not become the property of the coparcenary of which they are members with E. and F. Consequently neither the two latter, nor their descendants, will ever be entitled to share in it, so long as the direct heirs of A. are in existence (c). In one case the Bombay High Court decided that even ancestral movable property was so completely at the disposal of the father that his own sons could not claim a partition of it. But this decision appears to have been overruled by implication in a later case (d). The whole doctrine on which it rests has been already discussed (§ 291).

§ 392. Other matters were originally declared to be indivisible from their nature, such as apparel, carriages, riding-horses, ornaments, dressed food, water, pasture ground and roads, female slaves, houses or gardens, utensils, necessary implements of learning or of art, and documents evidencing a title to property (e). The ground of the exception seems to have been that they were things which could not be divided *in specie*, that they were originally of small value, and specially appropriated to the individual members of the family; consequently that if each were left in possession of his own, the value held by one would be balanced by a corresponding value in the hands of another. But as property of this sort increased in value, the strict letter of the texts was explained away, and it was established that where things were indivisible by their nature, they must either

Property indivisible from its nature.

(c) *Katama Nachiar v. Shivagunga Rajah*, 9 M. I. A. 539; *Periasawmy v. Periasawmy*, 5 I. A. 61.

(d) *Ramchandra Dada Naik v. Dada Mahadev*, 1 Bomb. H. C. Appx. 76 (2nd ed.), *contra*, *Lakshman Dada Naik v. Ramchandra*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561; *ante*, § 291.

(e) *Mitāksharā*, i. 4, § 16—27; *Dāya Dhāga*, vi. 2, § 23—30; V. May., iv. 7, § 23.

be enjoyed by the heirs in turns or jointly, as a well or a bridge, or sold, and their value distributed, or retained by one co-sharer exclusively, while the value of what he retained was adjusted by the appropriation of corresponding values to the others (*f*). Where part of the property consists of idols and places of worship, which are valuable from their endowments, or from the respect attaching to their possessor, the members will be decreed to hold them by turns, the period of tenure being in proportion to their shares in the *corpus* of the property (§ 364). A partition of a dwelling-house will be decreed if insisted on (*g*), but the Court will if possible try to effect such an arrangement as will leave it entire in the hands of one or more of the coparceners (*h*).

Impartible
property.

§ 393. Another class of estates which are indivisible, without being either separate or self-acquired, are those which by a special law or custom descend to one member of the family (generally the eldest), to the exclusion of the other members. The most common instance of this is in the case of ancient Zemindaries, which are in the nature of a Râj, or Sovereignty, or which descend to a single member by special family custom (*i*). But an estate which is not in the nature of a Râj, is not impartible, and does not descend to a single heir, merely because it is a Zemindary, in the absence of a special and binding family custom (*j*). “Another case in which property is *primâ facie* impartible, is where it is allotted by the State to a person in consideration of the discharge of particular duties, or as payment for an office, even though the duties or office may become hereditary in a particular family. An instance of the sort is to be found in the case of lands held under ghatwali tenure in Beerbhoom, which are hereditary but impartible (*Hurlall Singh v. Jorawun Singh*, 6 S. D. 169 (204) approved by P. C., 6 M. I. A. 125). So in Madras, where the office of

(*f*) 3 Dig. 376—385.

(*g*) *Hulodhur v. Ramnauth*, Marsh. 35.

(*h*) *Raj Coomaree v. Gopal Chunder*, 3 Calc. 514.

(*i*) See *ante*, § 49, 50.

(*j*) *Venkatapetty v. Ramachendra*, 1 Mad. Dec. 495; *Moottoovengada v. Toombayasawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 27; *Jagunada v. Kondarow*, ib. 112; *Moottoovenkata v. Munarsawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 217; *Koernarain v. Dhorinidhur*, S. D. of 1858, 1132.

curnum, or village accountant, has become hereditary, the land attached to the office is not liable to division (*Alyamallammal v. Venkatoovien*, 2 Mad. Dec. 85). In Bombay, however, there are numerous revenue and village offices, such as *deshmuk*, *despandya*, *desai*, and *patel*, which are similarly remunerated by lands originally granted by the State. These lands have, by lapse of time, come to be considered as purely private property of the family which holds the office, though they are subject to the obligation of discharging its duties, and defraying all necessary expenses. Land of this character though not invariably, is so frequently partible that it has been decided that in a suit for partition of such property, its nature raises no presumption that it is indivisible. Consequently the holder of the office of the land attached to it must rebut the claim for partition by evidence of a local or family usage that the land should be held exclusively by the holder of the office, (Steele, 203, 210, 229. *Shidojirav v. Naikojirav*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 228; *Gurushidappa v. Adreshappa*, P. C. March 5, 1880) on partition a portion of the property will be set aside sufficient to provide for the discharge of the duties, and the rest will become private property free from all obligations to the state. (Act XI of 1843, section 13, *Gurushidappa v. Adreshappa*, *ut. sup.*) So an estate which has been allotted by Government to a man of rank for the maintenance of his rank is indivisible, as otherwise the purpose of the grant would be frustrated. But where it is allotted for the maintenance of the family, then it is divisible among the direct descendants of the family, as the special object is to benefit all equally, not to maintain a special degree of state for one (*k*). And where an estate is impartible, its income is impartible, and the savings of such income, and the purchases made out of such savings are equally impartible, so long as they remain in the hands of the person out of whose income they proceeded. But as soon as they pass from him to a successor, they become divisible and ancestral property (*l*).

(*k*) *Visvanadha v. Bungaroo*, Mad. Dec. of 1851, 87, 94, 95; *Booloka Pondea v. Coomarasawmy*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 74; *Bodhrao v. Nursingh Rao*, 6 M. I. A. 426.

(*l*) See *ante*, § 258, and cases in last note.

Rāj taken in
partition.

Although a Rāj or Zemindary may be itself indivisible, there is no reason why it should not be taken into a division, as property allotted to a separating member. The result would be that its descent would be governed by the rules which relate to separate property (*m*). Therefore in a family governed by the Mitāksharā law, it would pass to female heirs in preference to male collaterals (*n*).

Mode of taking
account.

§ 394. Having ascertained what property there is to divide, the next step is to ascertain its amount. For this purpose it is necessary first to deduct all claims against the united family for debts due by it, or for charges on account of maintenance, marriages or family ceremonies, which it would have had to provide for, if it remained united (*o*). When these are set aside, an account must be taken of the entire family property in the hands of all the different members. In general this account is simply an enquiry into the existing assets. No charge is to be made against any member of the family, because he has received a larger share of the family income than another, provided he has received it for legitimate family purposes. Nor can the manager be charged with gains which he might have made, or savings which he might have effected, nor even with extravagance or waste which he has committed, unless it amounts to actual misappropriation. But of course advances made to any member for a special private purpose, for which he would have no right to call upon the family purse, or to discharge his own personal debts, contracted without the authority of the other members, or alienations of the family property made by an individual for his own benefit, would be properly debited against him in estimating his share (*p*). And conversely, money laid out by one member of the family upon the improvement or repair of the property, or for any other object of common benefit, in general con-

(*m*) An instance of the sort occurred in the case of *Runganayakamma v. Bulli Ramaya*, 6 I. A.

(*n*) *Per curiam*, 9 M. I. A. 589; *Tekaet v. Tekaetnee*, 20 W. R. 154.

(*o*) *Ante*, § 281; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 124; Mitāksharā, i. 7, § 3—5; Dāya Bhāga, i. § 47, iii. 2, § 38—42; V. May., iv. 4, iv. 6, § 1, 2, v. 4. § 14; 3 Dig. 73, 96, 389; 2 W. & B. 25—27. See as to the eight ceremonies, 3 Dig. 104.

(*p*) *Ante*, § 265; *Lakshmana Dada Naik v. Ramchandra*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561.

stitutes no debt to him from the rest of the family. The money which he expends is probably in itself part of the joint property, so that he is merely returning to the family its own. But this presumption might be rebutted. If the funds which he had expended were advanced out of his own self-acquired property, or out of the income of property which by mutual agreement had been set aside for his exclusive enjoyment, an arrangement with his coparceners by which he was to lay out money from his separate funds, and they were to reimburse his outlay, would be valid (*q*).

§ 395. SECONDLY, AS TO THE PERSONS WHO SHARE.—Any Coparceners. coparcener may sue for a partition, and every coparcener is entitled to a share upon partition (*r*). But some persons are entitled to a share upon a partition who cannot sue for it themselves. Upon these points there are many distinctions between the early and the existing law, and also between the law of Bengal and of the other provinces.

In Bengal the son has no right to demand a partition of property held by his father during the life of the latter (§ 221). The Mitāksharâ, on the other hand, expressly asserts the right (§ 219). Yet it is remarkable how slowly the right came to be recognized in practice. Sir Thomas Strange discusses the subject with an evident leaning against the right (*s*). Mr. Strange, in his Manual, treats the right as existing, but as one which, until very recent times, was opposed to public opinion, unless under exceptional circumstances (*t*). Several of the *futwâhs* quoted by West and Bühler affirm that the right only arises where the father is old, diseased or wasteful (*u*). The High Court of Bombay, in a case already cited, held that as regards movable property at all events the son could not enforce a partition against his father's consent; and in the argument it was stated that no bill for such a purpose had ever been filed in the Supreme Court (*v*). The right both of a son and a grandson under Mitāksharâ law to a partition of

Son during life
of father.

(*q*) *Muttusawmy v. Subramaneya*. 1 Mad. H. C. 309.

(*r*) As to the persons who are coparceners, see *ante*, § 244.

(*s*) 1 Stra. H. L. 179.

(*t*) Preface, viii.

(*u*) W. & B. 364, 402.

(*v*) *Ramchandra Dada Naik v. Mahadev*, 1 Bomb. H. C. Appx. 76 (2nd ed.)

- Grandson. ✓ movable and immovable property in the possession of a father, against his consent, has now, however, been settled by express decisions in Madras, Bengal and the N. W. Provinces, and is assumed to exist equally in Bombay (x).
- Great-grandson. The right of the great-grandson to a division is not expressly stated in any of the early Hindu law-books, but it rests on the same grounds as that of the son, viz., equality of right by birth (y).
- Afterborn sons. § 396. The rights even of unborn sons were originally so much respected, that when a son was born after a partition had taken place between a father and his sons, the partition was opened up again, in order to give him the share which he would have had if he had then been alive (z). And Jímûta Vâhana was of opinion that the rule was still applicable where the property to be distributed was inherited from the grandfather, because distribution of such property was illegal so long as the mother was capable of bearing children. Consequently the rights of an after-born child could not be prejudiced by the illegal act (a). Other writers, however, stated that a son born after a partition could only take his father's share, representing him to the exclusion of the previously divided brethren (b). The Mitâksharâ reconciles the conflict by saying that the latter texts lay down the general rule, while the former are limited to the case of a son who was in his mother's womb at the time of partition. Jímûta Vâhana takes the same view in cases where the partition is made by the father of his self-acquired property. Therefore in all cases where the birth of a son would add to the number of sharers, if the pregnancy is known at the time, the distribution should be deferred till its result is ascertained. If it is not known, and a son is afterwards born, a redistribution

(x) *Nagalinga v. Soobramaneya*, 1 Mad. H. C. 77; *Nagalinga v. Vellusawmy*, 1 Mad. Rep. 76; *Laljeet v. Rajcoomar*, 12 B. L. R. 373; *Kalipershad v. Ramcharan*, 1 All. 159. See *futwahs*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 41, 42; W. & B. 365, 370, 373; *per curiam*, 10 Bomb. H. C. 463.

(y) W. & B. 298, 302; *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 1, § 31—43; *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, viii. § 11; *Vivâda Chintâmaṇi*, 239; *Manu*, ix. § 137.

(z) *Vishnu*, xvii. § 3; *Yājñavalkya*, ii. 122.

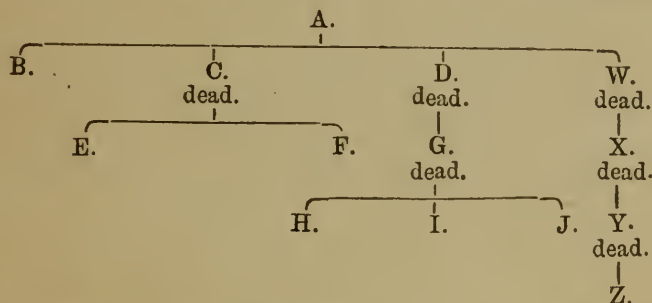
(a) *Dâya Bhâga*, i. § 45, vii. § 10. This restriction however is no longer in force, *ante*, § 222.

(b) *Manu*, ix. § 216; *Gautama*, xxviii. § 26; *Nârada*, xiii. § 44; *Vṛihaspati*, 3 Dig. 49, 435.

must take place of the estate as it then stands (*c*). If the father had divided the whole property among his sons, retaining no share for himself, it is said that the sons, with whom partition has been made, must allot from their shares a portion equal to their own to an after-born son (*d*).

§ 397. Under Mitāksharā law, the right to a share passes by survivorship among the remaining coparceners, subject to the rule that where any deceased coparcener leaves male issue they represent the rights of their ancestor to a partition (*e*). For instance, suppose A. dies, leaving a son B., two grandsons E. and F., three great-grandsons H., I., J., and one great-great-grandson Z. The last-named will take nothing, being beyond the fourth degree of descent (§ 244). The share of his ancestor W. will pass by sur-

Right of representation.



vivorship to the other brothers, B., C., D., and their descendants, and enlarge their interests accordingly. Hence B., C., and D. will each be entitled to one-third, E. and F. will take the third belonging to C., and H., I., J. will take D.'s third. Each class will take *per stirpes* as regards every other class, but the members of the class take *per capita* as regards each other. This rule applies equally whether the sons are all by the same wife, or by different wives (*f*).

(*c*) Mitāksharā, i. 6, § 1—12; Dāya Bhāga, vii. § 4; V. May., iv. 4, § 35—37; Yekayamian v. Agnisvarian, 4 Mad. H. C. 307; per Peacock, C. J., Kalidas v. Krishan Chandra, 2 B. L. R., F. B., pp. 118—121.

(*d*) 1 W. MacN. 47.

(*e*) It must always be remembered that what passes is not a share, as in Bengal, but the right to have a share on partition, ante, § 243.

(*f*) Mitāksharā, i. 5, § 1; V. May., iv. 4, § 20—22; Smṛiti Chandrikā, viii. § 1—16; Kātyāyana, 3 Dig. 7; Devaḷa, ib. 9, 10, 446, 448; Nārada, xiii. § 25; 2 Dig. 572, 575, 576; 1 Stra. H. L. 205; 2 Stra. H. L. 351—357; Mootoovengada v. Toombayasawmy, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 27; Poovathay v. Paroomal, Mad. Dec. of 1856, 5. In some families, however, a custom called *Patnī-bhaga* prevails of dividing according to mothers; so that if A. had two sons by his wife B., and

Representation
arises on death
of ancestor.

But if W. had effected a partition with A., then, on his death, his fourth would have passed at once to Z., supposing X. and Y. to have predeceased. But the right of any descendant, or set of descendants, to a partition assumes that the ancestors above him or them are dead. C. can compel a partition with A., but E. and F. cannot compel a partition during the life of C. Their right arises for the first time, when, by the death of C., his interest in the estates descends upon them. It is evident that they cannot have their own share apportioned without a previous apportionment of the share of C. But the sons or grandsons of C. cannot compel him to proceed to a partition unless he wishes it (*g*).

Bengal law.

§ 398. These principles require some modification where the case arises in Bengal. A son can never demand a partition of property held by his father, but as soon as A., in the above diagram, died, his property would descend to his sons and their descendants, and would be divisible among them in the same manner as above stated. But if any coparcener dies without male issue, but leaving a widow, a daughter, or daughter's sons, his share will descend to them, and will not lapse into the shares of the other members as it would do under the Mitāksharâ law (*h*). The principles of this line of succession will be discussed hereafter. It is sufficient here to say that representation does not extend beyond daughters. Daughters of the same class inherit to their father, *per stirpes*. But daughters' sons do not take as heirs to their mother, but as heirs to their grandfather. Consequently no daughter's son takes at all, until all the eligible daughters are dead; and such sons, where they do inherit, take *per capita* and not *per stirpes*. That is to say, if a man has two daughters, A. and B., of whom A. has one son, and B. has five, on the death of the last daughter the six sons will take equally (*i*).

§ 399. Illegitimate sons of the three higher classes are

three sons by C., the property would be divided into moieties, one going to the sons by B., and the other to the sons by C. *Sumrun v. Khedun Singh*, 2 S. D. 116 (147).

(*g*) Mitāksharâ, i. 5, § 3; W. & B. 298; 1 W. Mac. H. L. 50; 2 W. MacN. 150; 3 Dig. 9, 38, 388; *ante*, § 245; Dāya Bhāga, iii. 1, § 19, xi. 6, § 29.

(*h*) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 47, 59, 65; 1 W. MacN. 19, 22; *post*, § 403.

(*i*) See *post*, § 478, 479.

entitled to nothing but maintenance (*k*). As regards the illegitimate son of a Çûdra there is greater difficulty. It is said that if a partition is made by the father, he may be allotted a share at the father's choice, and that if the partition is made after the father's death, the brethren should make him a partaker of the moiety of a share. The Bengal writers say that where the partition is made by the father himself, or after his death in pursuance of his directions, the share of such an illegitimate son may be equal to that of a legitimate son. This would be natural enough, considering the power which a father in Bengal has in the disposition of his property. Vijñaneśvara lays down no rule upon the point, but speaks vaguely of "a share." Where there are no legitimate sons, but there are daughters or daughters' sons, the Mitāksharâ says that he is entitled to half a share only; the Dâya Bhâga and Dâya-krahma-sangraha say that he shares equally with the daughter's son (*l*): while the author of the Datta Chandrikâ considers that where there is no legitimate male issue, the illegitimate son of a Çûdra shares equally with the whole series of heirs down to the daughter's son (*m*). I know of no decision in which the right of an illegitimate son to sue for a partition has been raised or discussed.

Illegitimate sons.

§ 400. The legality of a partition during the minority of some of the coparceners is recognized by Baudhâyana, who says that "the shares of sons who are minors, together with the interest, should be placed under good protection until the majority of the owners" (*n*). One text of Kátyâyana appears to prohibit partition while there is a minor entitled to share (*o*). But it is quite evident that if such a rule existed, a partition could hardly ever take place. It is now quite settled that a partition made during the minority of

Minority not a bar.

(*k*) Mitāksharâ, i. 12, § 3; Dâya Bhâga, ix. § 28; V. May., iv. § 29—31; *Chuoturya v. Sahub Purhalad*, 7 M. I. A. 18; *Gajapathy v. Gajapathy*, 2 Mad. H. C. 369, reversed on a different point, 13 M. I. A. 497.

(*l*) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 133, 134; Mitāksharâ, i. 12, § 1. 2; Dâya Bhâga, ix. § 29, 30; D. K. S. vi. § 32—34; 3 Dig. 143; V. May., iv. 4, § 32. As to the meaning of the half-share, see *post*, § 466. As to the persons entitled under these texts, *post*, § 463, 464.

(*m*) Datta Chandrikâ, v. § 30, 31. See *post*, § 465.

(*n*) Baudhâyana, ii. § 2.

(*o*) 3 Dig. 544.

Minority.

one of the members will be valid, and if just and legal will bind him. Of course his interests ought to be represented by his guardian, or some one acting on his behalf, though I imagine that the fact of his not being so represented would be no ground for opening up the partition, if a proper one in other respects (*p*). When he arrives at full age he may apply to have the division set aside as regards himself, if it can be shown to have been illegal or fraudulent (*q*), or even if it was made in such an informal manner that there are no means of testing its validity (*r*). But a suit cannot be brought by or on behalf of a minor to enforce partition, unless on the ground of malversation, or some other circumstances, which make it for his interest that his share should be set aside and secured for him (*s*). Otherwise he might be thrust out of the family at the very time when he was least able to protect himself.

Absent members.

An absent coparcener stands on the same footing as a minor. The mere fact of his absence does not prevent partition. But it throws upon those who effect it the obligation to show that it was fair, and legally conducted, and the duty of keeping the share until the return of the absent member (*t*). The right to receive a share of property divided in a man's absence is laid down as extending to his descendants to the seventh degree. But of course it would now be regulated by the law of limitation (*u*).

Wife.

§ 401. A wife can never demand a partition during the life of her husband, since, from the time of marriage, she and he are united in religious ceremonies (*x*). But in former times, where a partition took place at the will of others, the interests of the women of the family, whether wives, widows, mothers, or daughters, were much

(*p*) 2 Stra. H. L. 362; 2 W. MacN. 14; *Mt. Deo Bunsee v. Dwarkanath*, 10 W. R. 273.

(*q*) *Nallappa v. Balammal*, 2 Mad. H. C. 182; *per curiam*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 159; *Mt. Deowanti v. Dwarkanath*, 8 B. L. R. 363, n.

(*r*) *Kalee Sunkur v. Denendro*, 23 W. R. 68.

(*s*) 1 Stra. H. L. 206; *Swamyar Pillay v. Chocalingum*, 1 Mad. H. C. 105; *Alimelammal v. Arunachellum*, 3 Mad. H. C. 63; *Kamakshi v. Chedumbara*, ib. 94.

(*t*) 1 Stra. H. L. 206; 2 Stra. H. L. 341; 3 Dig. 544.

(*u*) *Dāya Bhāga*, viii.; D. K. S. ix. See Act XV of 1877, Sched. ii. § 123, 127, 144.

(*x*) *A'pastamba*, xiv. § 16.

better provided for than they are at present. Where the partition was made in the father's lifetime, the furniture in the house and the wife's ornaments were set aside for the wife, and where the allotments of the males were equal, and the wives had no separate property, shares equal to those of the sons were set apart for the wives for their lives (y). According to Harinâtha, however, this right to a share did not arise where the husband reserved two or more shares to himself, as he was entitled to do, as the extra shares were a sufficient provision for his wives (z). And so, where the partition took place after the father's death, the mother and the grandmother were each entitled to a share equal to that of the sons, and the unmarried daughters each to the fourth of a share (a). If the sons chose to remain undivided they had a right to do so. The women of the family could never compel a division, and were entitled to no more than a maintenance. This is still the law universally where the father leaves male issue (b). But where he leaves no male issue there is, as already observed, a difference between the law of the Mitâksharâ and that of the Dâya Bhâga. Under the former system females never succeed to the share of an undivided member so long as there are male coparceners in existence; under the latter system they do. But according to the doctrines of Jîmûta Vâhana, the shares even of an undivided member are held in a sort of quasi-severalty (§ 327), so that the right of the female heirs to obtain possession of this share is rather a branch of the law of inheritance than of the law of partition (c).

Right of wife,

mother, and
daughter,

(y) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 115; Mitâksharâ, i. 2, § 8—10; Dâya Bhâga, iii. 2, § 31; D. K. S. vi. § 22—31; V. May., iv. 6, § 15.

(z) 1 W. MacN. 47. See too D. K. S. vi. § 27.

(a) Vyâsa, Vṛihaspati, 3 Dig. 12; Vishṇu, 3 Dig. 15; Manu, ix. § 118; Mitâksharâ, i. 7; Dâya Bhâga, iii. 2, § 29, 34; V. May., iv. 4, § 18, 39, 40.

(b) 2 W. MacN. 65, n.; F. MacN. 45, 57.

(c) See the remarks of Jagannâtha, 3 Dig. 9. "The right of partition consists in the relation of son to the original possessor and the like. Even the son of the daughter of a man who leaves no male issue, and the son of a mother's sister, are not intended by the term 'undivided,' since they belong to other families." A daughter's son in Bengal would certainly be entitled to have his grandfather's share ascertained and delivered to him (§ 398). But his suit would be more in the nature of an ejectment than of a partition, which implies previous membership in a joint family.

Obsolete in
Southern India.

Rights of women
in Southern
India.

§ 402. In Southern India the practice of allotting a share upon partition to wives, widows, or mothers has long since become obsolete. The *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, which admits the right of an aged father, when making a partition with his sons, to reserve a double share for himself, says that if he does not avail himself of this right, he ought to take, on account of each of his wives, a share equal to that taken by himself (*d*). But the right of a father to reserve an extra share for himself in regard to ancestral property is now obsolete (§ 412), and the corresponding practice of reserving a share for wives has also disappeared. The pandits of the Madras Sudr Court, in a case where a man had made a deed of division allotting a share to his son, and another to his wife and daughter, declared that such a division was illegal by Hindu law, "inasmuch as a wife and daughter, who have no right to property while a son is alive, are not capable of participating in the property while he is alive" (*e*). The practice in Madras, as far as my experience goes, is that in making a division during a father's life, no notice is taken of his wife or wives, their rights being included in his, and provided for out of his share. As regards the mother, where partition is made after the death of her husband, the *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, after discussing the texts already cited, points out that a widowed mother with male issue cannot be entitled to a partition of the heritage, as she is not an heir, but only to a portion sufficient for her maintenance and her religious duties. Consequently, that where she is stated to be entitled to a share equal to that of a son, this must mean such a portion as is necessary for her wants, and which can never exceed a son's share, but which is subject to be diminished, if the property is so large that the share of a son would be greater than she needs, or where she is already in possession of separate property (*f*). This is in accordance with existing practice. The plaint in a suit for partition in Madras always sets out the names of such widows as are chargeable upon the property, and asks

(*d*) *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, iv. § 26—39.

(*e*) *Meenatchee v. Chetumbra*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 61.

(*f*) *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, iv. § 4—17 ; 2 Stra. H. L. 309.

that the amount necessary for their maintenance may be ascertained and set aside for them. This amount, though of course in some degree estimated with reference to the magnitude of the property (§ 383), is never considered to be equal to, or to bear any definite proportion to the share of sons. Mr. W. MacNaghten states that this exclusion of mothers from a distinct share on partition is peculiar to the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, and that according to the Mitâksharâ and other works current in Benares and the Southern Provinces, not only mothers, but also childless wives are entitled to shares, the term *mâtâ* being interpreted to signify both mother and stepmother (*g*). How far the practice is according to the theory in other parts of India where the authority of the Mitâksharâ prevails I cannot state with certainty. I have been informed on high authority that the usage as regards allotting maintenance instead of shares to mothers, when a partition takes place in Bombay, is the same as that which prevails in Madras. But the futwâhs of the pandits lay it down that she is entitled to a share equal to that of a son, and the same view is stated by Mr. Justice West in a well considered judgment in a recent case (*h*). I know of no express decision upon the point. The High Court of Bengal has on several occasions asserted that under Mitâksharâ law a mother is entitled when a partition takes place to have a share equal to that of a son set apart for her, either by way of maintenance or as a portion of the inheritance, even though the partition takes place in the lifetime of the father (*i*). As the rights of a mother to a share have been rigorously maintained by Jîmûta Vâhana, it is probable enough that in the adjoining provinces the letter of the old law would be still adhered to.

Benares law.

Bombay.

(*g*) 1 W. MacN, 50. Vyâsa expressly lays down that "the wives of the father who have no sons are entitled to equal shares (with the sons of other wives); and so are all the wives of the paternal grandfather." 3 Dig. 12; V. May., iv. 4, § 19, says this includes step-grandmothers also. So also the Mithilâ school, D. K. S. vii. § 7. See 3 Dig. 13.

(*h*) 2 Bor. 454; W. & B. 91, 92, 97, 100, 306, 390; *Lakshman Râmchandra v. Satyabhâmabâi*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 494, 504.

(*i*) *Judoonath v. Bishonath*, 9 W. R. 61; *Mahabeer v. Ramyad Singh*, 12 B. L. R. 90; *Laljeel Singh v. Rajcoomar*, ib. 373.

Rights of women
in Bengal.

§ 403. Under the law of Bengal the rights of females stand much higher than they do in the other provinces. Partition during the life of a father is so uncommon in Bengal, that I can find no authority as to setting aside shares for the wives. The *Dâya-krahma-sangraha* seems to limit the right of wives to have such shares to cases where the father makes a partition of his self-acquired property. In such a case, if peculiar property has been already given to one wife, the other wives, whether childless or otherwise, are entitled to have their shares made up to an equal amount. If they have had no peculiar property, then they are to have shares equal to those of sons (*k*). After the death of the father, the right of the widow depends upon whether the father has left male issue or not, and whether she is a mother or a childless wife. That is to say, she may either be a coparcener before partition, or only entitled to a share in the event of a partition, or entitled in no case to more than maintenance.

Right of widow
in Bengal.

Where no issue.

1. If the father dies leaving no male issue, his widow becomes his heir, whether he is divided or not. She is in the strictest sense a coparcener. She became a member of the same *gotra* with her husband on her marriage, and is the surviving half of his body, as well as his heir (*l*). She can herself sue for a partition, and need not wait for her share until a partition is brought about by the act of others (*m*).

Stepmother.

2. If the father dies leaving issue, and a widow who is not the mother of such issue, she is never entitled to more than maintenance. The writers of the Bengal school differ in this respect from those of the other provinces, since they exclude a stepmother from the operation of the texts which speak of the share of a mother. And this exclusion equally applies, whether the widow was originally childless, or was

(*k*) D. K. S. vi. § 22—26.

(*l*) 1 W. & B. 147; *Vrihaspati*, 3 Dig. 458; *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 1, § 14, note, 43, 46, 54; D. K. S. ii. 2, § 41.

(*m*) F. MacN. 39, 59; 1 W. MacN. 49; *Dhurm Das v. Mt. Shama Soonderi*, 3 M. I. A. 229, 241; *Shib Pershad v. Gunga Monee*, 16 W. R. 291; *Soudami-ney v. Jogesh Chunder*, 2 Calc. 262. As to the rights of several widows *inter se*, post, § 469. As to the right of widows among the Jains to demand a partition of their husband's share, see *Sheo Singh v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P., II. C. 406; 5 I. A. 87.

the mother of daughters only, or was the mother of sons whose line has become extinct before partition (*n*).

3. If the father dies leaving male issue, and also a widow who is the mother of such issue, she is only entitled to maintenance until partition, and she can never herself require a partition. But if a partition takes place by the act of others, she will be entitled to receive a share, if the effect of that partition is to break up or diminish the estate out of which she would otherwise be maintained (*o*). Hence her claim to a share is limited to the two following cases: *first*, when the partition takes place between her own descendants, upon whose property her maintenance is a charge. *Secondly*, when it takes place in respect of property in which her husband had an interest.

Mother.

Right of mother in Bengal.

§ 404. *First*. If a widowed mother has only one son, she can never claim a share from him. But if he dies, and his sons come to a division, then she would be entitled to share with them as grandmother. Similarly, if a man dies leaving three widows, each of whom has one son, and these three sons come to a division, none of the mothers would have a right to a share; because each of them retains her claim intact upon her own son. But if the sons of one son divide among themselves, their grandmother will be entitled to a share. If the grandsons of all three widows divide, all the grandmothers will be entitled (*p*). In each case the share of the widow will be equal to the share of the persons who effect the partition. If it takes place between her sons, she will take the share of a son; if between her grandsons, she will take the share of a grandson (*q*). If a mother has three sons, one of whom dies leaving grandsons, and a partition takes place between the two surviving sons and the grandsons, the mother will be entitled to the same share as if the division had been effected between

Grandmother.

(*n*) F. MacN. 41, 57; 1 W. MacN. 50; 3 Dig. 13; D. K. S. vii. § 3, 5, 6; Dāya Bhāga, iii. 2, § 30; *ante*, § 402.

(*o*) 2 W. MacN. 65, n.; F. MacN. 45, 57, 59. Hence until partition she has no alienable interest. See *Judoonath v. Bishonath*, 9 W. R. 61.

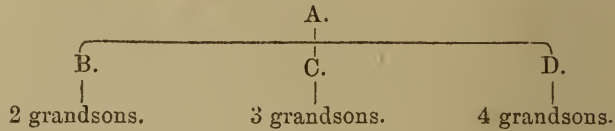
(*p*) F. MacN. 39, 41, 54.

(*q*) D. K. S. vii. § 2, 4. If she has already been provided for to the extent to which she would be entitled on partition, she takes no more; if to a less extent, she takes as much more as will make up her share. *Judoonath v. Brojonath*, 12 B. L. R. 385.

Shibasomdny Delya v. Hussomatty Delya. 53 7-242 Cal 191.

Grandmother in
Bengal.

the three sons; that is to say, the property will be divided into four shares, of which the mother will take one, each surviving son will take another, and the grandsons will take the fourth (*r*). Where the partition takes place between grandsons by different fathers, the matter becomes more complicated. For instance, suppose A. to have died leaving a



widow and three sons, and these sons to die, leaving respectively two, three, and four grandsons, and that these grandsons come to a division. If their grandmother was dead, the property would be divided into three portions, *per stirpes*, which would again be divided into two, three, and four parts, *per capita* (§ 397). But if the grandmother is alive, she will be entitled to the same share as a *grandson*. But it is evident that the grandsons by B. take a larger share than those by C., and these again a larger share than those by D. The mode of division, therefore, is stated to be, that the whole property is divided into ten shares, of which the grandmother will take one, the two sons of B. will take three, the three sons of C. will take three, and the four sons of D. will take three. If the widows of B., C. and D. were also living, they would be entitled to shares also. Each widow would take the same as her son. But in order to arrive at this share, a fresh division would have to be made. The three-tenths taken by the sons of B. would be divided into three parts, of which his widow would take one. Similarly, the three-tenths taken by the sons of C. would be divided into four parts, and the three-tenths taken by the sons of D. would be divided into five parts, of which one would go to the respective widows of C. and D., the remainder being divisible among their sons (*s*). The same widow may take in different capacities, as heir of one branch of the family, and as mother or grandmother in

(*r*) *Prankissen v. Muttusoondery*, Fulton, 389; *Gooroopershad v. Seebchunder*, F. MacN. 29, 52.

(*s*) F. MacN. 52—54.

another branch. A very complicated instance of this sort is recorded by Sir F. MacNaghten as having been decided in the Supreme Court at Calcutta (*t*).

In one case in Bengal, where a partition was made after the death of all the sons by their widows, it was held that the grandmother had no right to a share. No counsel appeared for the grandmother, and, as might be expected, no precedents were cited. The decision can hardly be looked upon as of much weight, in the face of the direct authority on the other side (*u*).

Where a partition takes place among great-grandsons only, it is said that the great-grandmother has no right to a share (*x*). But if a son be one of the partitioning parties with great-grandsons by another son, she would take a son's share. And if a grandson and great-grandson divide, she would take a grandson's share (*y*).

Great-grandmother.

§ 405. *Secondly*. "Partition, to entitle a mother to the share, must be made of ancestral property, or of property acquired by ancestral wealth. Therefore, if the property had been acquired by A., the father of B. and C., and B. and C. come to a division of it, their mother (the widow of A.) shall, but their grandmother shall not take a share of it. And if the estate shall have been acquired by B. and C. themselves, neither their mother nor grandmother will be entitled to a share upon partition" (*z*).

Wife only shares in husband's property. ✓

§ 406. Where a partition takes place during the life of the father, the daughter has no right to any special apportionment. She continues under his protection till her marriage; he is bound to maintain her and to marry her, and the expenditure he is to incur is wholly at his discretion (*a*). But where the division takes place after the death of the father, the same texts which direct that the mother should receive

Rights of daughter.

(*t*) *Sree Motee Jeemoney v. Attaram Ghose*, F. MacN. 64; *Callychurn v. Jonava Dasse*, 1 Ind. Jur. N. S. 284; *Jugomohan v. Sarodamoyee*, 3 Calc. 149; *Torit Bhoosun v. Tarapoosonno*, 4 Calc. 756.

(*u*) *Rayee Monee v. Puddum Mookhee*, 12 W. R. 409, affirmed on review, 13 W. R. 66. See Vyâsa and Vrihaspati, 3 Dig. 12, where the right of the grandmother to a share is expressly asserted; and so Jagannâtha says, 3 Dig. 27.

(*x*) 3 Dig. 27. F. MacN. 28, 51, doubted by Dr. Wilson, *Works*, v. 25.

(*y*) F. MacN. 52.

(*z*) F. MacN. 51, 54.

(*a*) *Mitâksharâ*, i. 7, § 14.

Daughter.

a share equal to that of a son, direct that the daughter should receive a fourth share (b). It is evident, however, that there was much less need to set apart a permanent provision for a daughter than for a widow. The expenses of her marriage, and her maintenance for the very few years that she could remain in her father's family, constituted the only charge that had to be met in respect of her. Hence it was very early considered that the mention of a definite fourth only meant that a sufficient amount must be allotted to each daughter to defray her nuptials. This view is combated by Vijñaneśvara, who maintains that the letter of the law must be respected. The Smṛiti Chandrikā, however, evidently inclined to the modern doctrine, as it states that the full fourth is only to be given where the estate is inconsiderable. And it is expressly asserted by the Mādhavīya and the Bengal writers, and those of the Mithilā school (c). The practice at present is in conformity with this opinion (d).

Where daughters take as joint-heirs, the effect of partition between them comes under the law of succession, and will be discussed hereafter (§ 475).

Strangers.

§ 407. A stranger cannot compel a partition, in the sense of compelling any or all of the members of a family to assume the *status* of divided members, with the legal consequences following upon that *status*. But he may acquire such rights over the property of any coparcener as to compel him to separate the whole or part of his interest in the joint property, and so sever the coparcenary in respect of it. This may be effected either by actual assignment, or by operation of law, as by insolvency, or upon a sale in execution of a decree (e). How far a member of an undivided family under Mitāksharā law can, by his own voluntary act, transfer his rights in the joint property to a stranger, is a matter upon which there is much difference of opinion, and

(b) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 124. See *ante*, § 401. As to the mode of calculating the fourth, see Mitāksharā, i. 7, § 5—10; 3 Dig. 93, 94; Smṛiti Chandrikā, iv. § 34; Wilson, Works, v. 42.

(c) Mitāksharā, i. 7, § 11; Smṛiti Chandrikā, iv. § 18, 19; Mādhavīya, § 25, where he misrepresents the opinion of Vijñaneśvara; Dāya Bhāga, iii. 2, § 39; D. K. S. vii. § 9, 10; 3 Dig. 90—94.

(d) F. MacN. 55, 98; 1 W. MacN. 50.

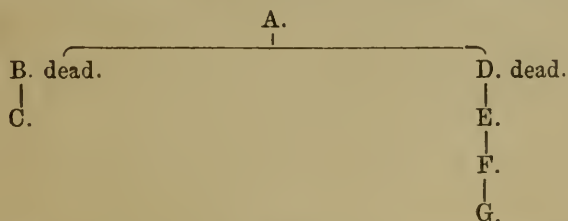
(e) *Per curiam*, 6 M. I. A. 539; *Deendyal v. Jugdeep Narain*, 4 I. A. 247.

which has already been examined (*f*). But so far as the right of transfer is recognized it will be enforced, either by putting the purchaser in possession of an undivided interest, or by compelling the owner of the undivided interest to proceed to, or permit a partition, by means of which the hostile right can be satisfied (*g*).

§ 408. Persons who labour under any defect which disqualifies them from inheriting, are equally disentitled to a share on partition (*h*). But except in the case of degradation, which has now been practically abolished by Act XXI of 1850, such incapacity is purely personal, and does not attach to their legitimate issue (*i*). Its effect is to let in the next heir, precisely as if the incapacitated person were then dead. But that heir must claim upon his own merits, and does not step into his father's place. For instance, suppose the dividing parties were C. and F., and that E. were incapacitated but alive, his son F. would be entitled to claim half

Disqualified heirs.

Disqualification is personal. ✓



of the property. But if F. was the incapacitated person, and D., and E. were dead, G. would have no claim, being beyond the limits of the coparcenary (*k*). On the other hand, such disqualification only operates if it arose before the division of the property. One already separated from his coheirs is not deprived of his allotment (*l*). And if the defect be removed at a period subsequent to partition,

Result of its removal.

(*f*) *Ante*, § 307, *et seq.*

(*g*) *Anand Chandra v. Prankisto Dutt*, 3 B. L. R., O. C. 14; *Rughoonath v. Luckun Chunder*, 18 W. R. 23; *Muddun Gopal v. Mt. Gowerbutty*, 21 W. R. 190; *Lall Jha v. Shaik Juma*, 22 W. R. 116; *Jhubboo Lall v. Khoob Lall*, *ib.* 294.

(*h*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10; V. May., iv. 11; *Dāya Bhāga*, v.; D. K. S. iii. See *post*, chap. xix.

(*i*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 9—11; *Dāya Bhāga*, v. § 17—19. As to adopted sons, see *ante*, § 97.

(*k*) 2 W. MacN. 42; *Bodhnarain v. Oonwao Singh*, 13 M. I. A. 519; *per Peacock*, C. J., 2 B. L. R., F. B. 115; *ante*, § 245.

(*l*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 6; *Sevachetumbarā v. Parasucty*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 210.

Removal of
disability.

the right to share arises in the same manner as, or upon the analogy of a son born after partition (*m*). How this analogy is to be worked out is not so clear. If the removal of the defect is to be treated as a new birth at the time of such removal, then the principles previously laid down would apply (*n*). If the partition took place during the life of the father, and one of the sons were then incapable, he would take no share. But if his defect were afterwards removed, he would inherit his father's share. If, however, the partition took place after the father's death, and one of the brothers was excluded as being incapable, and was afterwards cured, his cure could only be treated as a new birth by the fiction that he was in his mother's womb at the time of the partition. If this analogy could be applied, he would be entitled to have the division opened up again, and a new distribution made for his benefit. But that would be rather a violent fiction to introduce, in a case where the incapacity was removed, possibly many years after new rights had been created by the division, and acted upon. Suppose, however, that the incapable heir was never cured, but had a son who was capable of inheriting. If the son was actually born, or was in the womb, at the time of the partition, he would be entitled to a share, if sufficiently near of kin. But if he was neither born nor conceived at that time, he could not claim to have the partition re-opened. He could only claim to succeed as heir to the share taken by his grandfather; and if the partition took place between the brothers, he could claim nothing more than maintenance (*o*).

Effect of fraud.

§ 409. It has been suggested that a coparcener, otherwise entitled, may lose his right to a share if he has been guilty of defrauding his coheirs. This view rests upon a text of *Manu* (*p*): "Any eldest brother who from avarice shall defraud his younger brother, shall forfeit his primogeniture, be deprived of his share, and pay a fine to the king." This text is explained by *Kallûka Bhaṭṭa* and *Jag-*

(*m*) *Mitāksharâ*, ii. 10, § 7; *V. May.*, iv. 11 § 2.

(*n*) *Ante* § 396.

(*o*) See this subject discussed by *Peacock*, C. J., *Kalidas v. Krishan Chandra*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 118—121.

(*p*) ix. § 213.

annâtha as meaning, that the eldest brother by such fraudulent conduct forfeits his right to the special share to which in early times he was entitled by seniority (*q*). Yājñavalkya and Kātyāyana merely say, that property wrongly kept back by one of the co-sharers shall be divided equally among all the sharers when it is discovered (*r*). This excludes the idea that the fraudulent person is to forfeit his whole share, or even his share in the property so secreted. The Mitāksharā discusses the act with reference only to the question of criminality. The author decides that the act is criminal, but does not assert that it is to be followed by forfeiture, and seems to assume that the only result will be that the partition will be opened up, and a fresh distribution made of the property wrongly withheld (*s*). The other commentators of the Benares school either follow the Mitāksharā, or pass the point over without special notice (*t*). On the other hand, the Bengal writers are of opinion, that the act of one coparcener, in withholding part of the property which is common to all, is not technically theft, and is not to be punished by any forfeiture (*u*). The Madras Sudder Court in one case followed the literal meaning of the text of Manu, and held that it was a complete answer to a suit for partition by a brother, that he had committed a theft of part of the paternal property. In this decision they set aside the opinion of their senior pandit, who was of opinion that the embezzler of common property incurred no forfeiture thereby. The junior pandit had first stated generally, that the person who had embezzled part of the common property forfeited all claim to share in the estate. On giving in his written opinion, he modified this view by limiting the forfeiture to a prohibition of sharing in the portion actually embezzled. This opinion also the

Fraud of co-
parcener.

(*q*) 2 Dig. 564.

(*r*) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 126; 3 Dig. 398.

(*s*) Mitāksharā, i. 9 This chapter seems to have been differently understood by Sir Thomas and Mr. Strange, 1 Stra. H. L. 232; Stra. Man. § 273. Messrs. West and Bühler take the view stated in the text, W. & B. 307.

(*t*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, xiv. § 4—6; Mādhavīya, § 54; V. May., iv. 6 § 3; Vīramitrodaya, cited W. & B. 308.

(*u*) Dāya Bhāga, xiii. § 2, 8—15; D. K. S. viii.; 3 Dig. 397, 400.

Court set aside, preferring that first given (x). The Court of the N. W. Provinces has arrived at an exactly opposite conclusion, and has laid down that the wrongful appropriation by one brother of part of the joint estate, which the others might have recovered by an action at law, was no bar to a suit by him for partition (y). This certainly appears to me to be the sounder view.

Partition
prohibited.

§ 410. Any direction in a will prohibiting a partition, or postponing the period for partition, is invalid, as it forbids the exercise of a right which is essential to the full enjoyment of family property by Hindu law (z). On the other hand, an agreement between the members of a Hindu family not to come to a partition would be binding upon themselves. But unless the agreement also contained a condition against alienation, it would not prevent any of the parties to it from selling his share, and would be no bar to a suit by the vendee to compel a partition (a). Nor do I imagine that such an agreement could ever bind the descendants of the parties to it (b).

Lapse of time.

§ 411. As Hindu law contemplates union and not partition as the normal state of the family, it follows that lapse of time is never in itself a bar to a partition. But the Statute of Limitations will operate from the time that a plaintiff is excluded from his share, and that such exclusion becomes known to him (c).

Special shares
formerly
allowed.

§ 412. THIRD, THE MODE OF DIVISION.—The principle of Hindu law is equality of division, but this was formerly subject to many exceptions, which have almost, if not altogether, disappeared. One of these exceptions was in favour of the eldest son, who was originally entitled to a special share on partition, either a tenth or a twentieth in excess of the others, or some special chattel, or an extra

(x) *Canacumma v. Narasimmah*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 118.

(y) *Kalka Pershad v. Budree Sah*, 3 N. W. P., H. C. 267.

(z) *Nubkissen v. Hurris Chunder*, F. MacN. 323; *Mokundo Lall v. Gonesh Chunder*, 1 Calc. 104; *Jeebun Kristo v. Romanath*, 23 W. R. 297.

(a) *Rhamdone Ghose v. Anund Chunder*, 2 Hyde, 97; *Anund Chandra v. Prankristo*, 3 B. L. R., O. C. 14; *Anath Nath v. Mackintosh*, 8 B. L. R. 60.

(b) See *Venkatramana v. Bramana*, 4 Mad. H. C. 345.

(c) *Thakur Durriao Singh v. Davi Singh*, 1 I. A. 1; *Kali Kishore v. Dunning*, 3 Calc. 228; Act XV of 1877, sched. ii. § 127.

portion of the flocks (*d*). Sir H. S. Maine suggests¹ that this extra share was given as the reward, or the security for impartial distribution; and refers to the fact that such extra privileges were sometimes awarded to younger sons (*e*), or to the father, as a proof that the right was unconnected with the rule of primogeniture (*f*). It seems to me probable that the double share which the father was allowed to retain for himself (*g*), was the inducement given to him to consent to a partition, at the time when his consent was indispensable (§ 217), and perhaps also was intended to enable him to support the female members of the family, who would naturally remain under his care. Among the Hill tribes, when a division takes place, the family house sometimes passes to the youngest, sometimes to the eldest son; but invariably the son who takes the house takes with it the burthen of supporting the females of the family (*h*). The practice of allotting a larger share to the father would naturally survive, though to a lesser degree, in favour of the eldest son as head of the family. Under the law of the Mitāksharā the practice of giving an extra share to the father is now said either to be a relic of a former age, or only to apply to a partition by the father of his own self-acquired property (*i*). As between brothers or other relations absolute equality is now the invariable rule in all the provinces (*k*), unless perhaps where some special family custom to the contrary is made out (*l*); and this rule equally applies whether the partition is made by the father, or after his death (*m*).

Special shares
now obsolete.

(*d*) A'pastamba, xiii. § 13; Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 2—5; Gautama, xxviii. § 11, 12; Vāsishta, xvii. § 23; Manu, ix. § 112, 114, 156; Nārada, xiii. § 13; Devala, 2 Dig. 553; Vṛhaspati, ib. 556; Hārita, ib. 558; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 114.

(*e*) Gautama, xxviii. § 6, 7; Vāsishta, xvii. § 23; Manu, ix. § 112.

(*f*) Early Institutions, 197.

(*g*) Nārada, xiii. § 12; Vṛhaspati, 3 Dig. 44; Kātyāyana, ib. 53; Sancha & Lichita, 2 Dig. 555.

(*h*) Breeks, Primitive Tribes, 9, 39, 42, 68.

(*i*) Mitāksharā, i. 6, § 7; Mādhaviya, § 16; V. May., iv. 6, § 12, 13. See Smṛiti Chandrikā, ii. 1, § 28—32, 41, where it is said to be allowable on a partition made by an aged parent.

(*k*) Mitāksharā, i. 2, § 6, i. 3, § 1—7; Smṛiti Chandrikā, ii. 2, § 2, ii. 3, § 16—24; Mādhaviya, § 9; V. May., iv. 6, § 8—11, 14, 17; Dāya Bhāga, iii. 2, § 27; D. K. S., vii. § 12, 13.

(*l*) Sheo Buksh v. Futteh Singh, 2 S. D. 265 (340); 2 W. MacN. 16.

(*m*) Bhyrochund v. Russomunee, 1 S. D. 28 (36); Neelkaunt v. Muneo Chowdhraen, ib. 58 (77); Talisar Singh v. Puhlwan Singh, 3 S. D. 301 (402); Lakshmana Dada Naik v. Ramchandra, 1 Bomb. L. R. 561.

Other grounds of preference arose in regard to sons of different rank; that is to say, sons by mothers of different caste, or sons of the ten supplementary species. These shared in different proportions, or some absolutely to the exclusion of others (*n*). But these different sorts of sons are long since obsolete (§ 74, 83). The right of a person who has made acquisitions, in which he has been slightly assisted by the joint property, to reserve to himself a double share, has already been fully considered (§ 260).

Where property
is self-acquired.

§ 413. Hitherto we have been considering the case of joint property, as to which partition was a matter of right and not of favour. There is greater uncertainty where the partition was of property which was divisible as a matter of favour and not of right. Under Mitāksharā law this case could only arise where the father chose to divide his self-acquired property among his sons. It is quite clear that the father might give away this property to any one he chose (§ 328), and it would seem to follow that he might distribute it among his family at his own pleasure. Vishṇu says, "If a father make a partition with his sons, he does so in regard to his own self-acquired property by his own pleasure" (*o*). This of course may refer to his right of withholding such property absolutely from distribution. Other texts which seem to leave the father a discretion as to allowing larger or smaller shares to his sons, may refer to the practice of giving extra shares to an elder son, an acquirer or the like (*p*). The interpretation put upon these texts by the Hindu commentators was, that even in regard to self-acquired property, the right of the father to make an unequal distribution could only exist where there was either a legal reason, as in case of an elder son's share, or a moral reason, such as the necessitous state of one of the sons, and that it could never exist where the act emanated from mere partiality or vicious preference (*q*). The author of the Smṛiti Chandrikā sums up his argument upon the point by saying,

(*n*) Mitāksharā, i. 8, 11; Dāya Bhāga, ix. § 12; D. K. S., vii. § 19; V. May., iv. 4, § 27.

(*o*) xvii. § 1.

(*p*) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 114, 116; Nārada, xiii. § 15, 16.

(*q*) 3 Dig. 540, 541, 546; Mitāksharā, i. 2, § 6, 13, 14.

“It is hence settled that unequal distribution made by the father, even of his own self-acquired property, according to his whims, without regard to the restrictions contained in the *Çâs-tras*, is not maintainable, where sons are dissatisfied with such distribution” (r). In a Madras case, where a man had made a division of his self-acquired property, giving about a tenth to his son, and the rest to his wife and daughter, the Sudder Pandits said that such a disposition would be valid as regards the personalty, but not as regards the realty (s). In the Punjâb it is held that a man may distribute his self-acquisitions at his own pleasure (t). If the rule is anything more than a moral precept, it must depend upon the distinction, which I will notice presently, between a partition, which may be effected by mere agreement, and a gift, which requires delivery of possession. ✓

Where property is self-acquired.

§ 414. In Bengal the peculiar doctrines of the *Dâya Bhâga* leave a father practically at liberty to dispose of all his property, no matter of what sort, or how acquired, at his own free pleasure, in favour of any one upon whom he chooses to bestow it. One would expect, therefore, to find that, when he chose to distribute it among his sons, he would be at liberty to do so to whatever extent, and in whatever proportions he liked. This, however, is by no means so. *Jîmûta Vâhana* draws the distinction between self-acquired and ancestral property, saying that in the former case the father may give his sons greater or lesser allotments at his pleasure, but in the latter case his discretion is limited. He cannot reserve more for himself than his double share (u). With regard to his sons, he is also under restrictions. If the partition is made at the request of his sons, he is bound to give each an equal share, the legal deduction in favour of the eldest being alone allowed (x). If however he makes the partition of his own accord, he may make a partial or a total division. The former seems not to come under the rules which govern a legal division. The father appears

Bengal law.

(r) *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, ii. 1, § 17—24; *Varadrâjah*, p. 8; 1 *Str.* H. L. 194; 2 *W. MacN.* 147, note.

(s) *Meenatchee v. Chetumbara*, *Mad. Dec.* of 1853, 61.

(t) *Punjâb Cust.* 35.

(u) *Dâya Bhâga*, ii. § 15-20, 35, 47, 56, 73; *D. K. S.* vi. § 16.

(x) *Dâya Bhâga*, ii. § 86.

By father in
Bengal.

still to remain the head of the family, and to retain a certain control over the whole property, but allots small portions of it to his sons, retaining the right to take these portions back, if he becomes indigent (*y*). Where however the partition is a total one, the same distinction exists between his rights over the ancestral and self-acquired property. As regards the former, the distribution must be equal or uniform, in the sense of not being arbitrary; that is, any inequality in the shares of the sons must be an inequality prescribed, or at least permitted by the law, as arising from the superior age or merit of the son whom he prefers (*z*). But as regards the self-acquired property, he may make a distribution according to his own free will, though even in this case the preference must arise from motives recognized by the law, on account of the good qualities or piety of the one who is preferred, or his incapacity, numerous family, or the like (*a*). Whether such reasons are sufficient to authorize an unequal distribution of ancestral property also, does not seem clear. In commenting on the text of Nârada (xiii. 4), the father, "being advanced in years, may himself separate his sons, either dismissing the eldest with the best share, or in any manner, as his inclination may prompt," he says that this last clause means something different from the giving of an extra share to the first-born, but that the discretion so allowed is again restrained by the subsequent text (xiii. 16), which forbids a distribution made under improper influences, or contrary to the directions of law (*b*). If these passages apply also to ancestral property, the result would be that the power of distribution, both of ancestral and self-acquired property, would stand on the same footing. The father might divide either sort unequally, if he could find any justifying pretext in the superior qualities or greater necessities of the son whom he preferred. The Dâya-krahma-sangraha, however, limits the right of making an unequal

(*y*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 57; 2 W. MacN. 148; D. K. S. vi. § 8.

(*z*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 50, 76, 79. See as to extra shares, ib. § 37, 42, 74,

(*a*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 74, 76, 82.

(*b*) Dâya Bhâga, ii. § 81-85.

distribution among sons, in consequence of their superior qualifications or greater necessities, to the case of self-acquired property, or ancestral movable property, such as gems, pearls, corals, gold and other effects (*c*). As regards ancestral landed property, the only inequality he appears to sanction is the special share for the elder son (*d*). In the case of a man's own self-acquired property, he may allot it as he chooses, subject as before to the necessity of showing some proper ground of preference, and an absence of improper motive (*e*).

By father in
Bengal.

§ 415. It is, of course, obvious that where a father is allowed to prefer one son to another on the ground of superior piety or moral qualifications, and is himself constituted as the sole judge of such qualifications, it is merely another way of saying that he may distribute the property as he chooses. A little hypocrisy is all that is needed in order to convert illegality into legality (*f*). But even as regards ancestral immovable property, the Bengal pandits appear in two cases to have taken the view which is suggested by Jímûta Váhana, rather than that which is expressed by the Dâya-krahma-sangraha and to lay it down that grounds of personal preference, actually existing, will justify a father in preferring one son over another (*g*). The only question that arises is, whether the pandits in the two last cases were not speaking of a gift, and not of a partition. I think they were. I have already quoted the series of decisions in Bengal which practically affirm the right of a father to do what he wishes with his property. They seem in complete conflict with the opinions of the pandits in the case of *Bhowanny Churn v. Ramkaunt* (*h*). Now it will be observed that throughout the opinions of the pandits in the latter case, they directed their attention exclusively to the law of partition, and only cited texts bearing upon that law. In the opinions cited in

(*c*) D. K. S. vi. § 13, 18—20. acc. Jagannâtha, 3 Dig. 39, 42, and pandits in *Bhowanny Churn v. Ramkaunt*, 2 S. D. 202 (259); 2 W. MacN. 2, 16.

(*d*) Ib. § 21.

(*e*) Ib. § 8—15. See F. MacN. 242—263.

(*f*) See the opinions of Pandits, quoted F. MacN. 260; 3 Dig. 1.

(*g*) F. MacN. 260, 265.

(*h*) 2 S. D. 202 (259); *ante*, § 326. See this case discussed by Sir F. MacN. p. 283; *per curiam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 42, 48; Wilson's Works, v. 76, 88.

By father in
Bengal.

the other cases, and referred to in the remarks on *Bhowanny Churn's* case, they directed their attention as exclusively to the law of gifts, and only cited texts showing the power of an owner of property to dispose of it during his lifetime. The fact is, the two sets of texts are quite irreconcilable. They mark different periods of law. The former are a survival from the time, when the power of a father over property was as restricted in Bengal, as it is now in the Provinces governed by the Mitâksharâ. These texts probably remained unexplained away, because unequal distributions of a man's whole property continued to be unusual. The texts which forbid alienations of particular portions of it were explained away, because such alienations became common. Jagan-nâtha tries to reconcile the two principles which allow a gift to one in preference to another, but forbid a distribution which gives more to one than another (i). His reasoning, so far as I am able to follow it, appears to be, that, where a father proceeds to a partition with his sons, he divests himself of his property, with a view to its vesting again in those who are entitled to share it by virtue of their affinity to him. That being so, it can only vest in such persons, and in such proportions, as the law of partition directs. But when he divests himself of his property in order to make a gift, he immediately vests it again in the person, be it a stranger or otherwise, to whom he delivers the possession. The transaction is valid if it conforms to the law of gifts. Now this is really all that was decided by the case of *Bhowanny Churn v. Ramkaunt*. The pandits were unanimous that as a partition the transaction was bad. In this they were apparently right. They differed as to whether it would have been invalid for want of possession, if, as a partition, it had been legal. As to this it may now be taken that their doubts were unfounded, and that actual possession is not necessary in order to make a partition final and binding (§ 418). The Judges of the Sudder Court accepted their finding that the distribution was illegal. If so, it could only take effect as a series of gifts. But viewed

Bhowanny
Churn's case.

(i) 3 Dig. 5, 47.

in this light it was inoperative, because there had been no delivery of possession (§ 329). The result would be, that a father under Mitāksharā law, in dealing with his self-acquired property, or any other property in which his sons take no interest by birth, and a father under Bengal law in dealing with any property, may distribute it as he likes. If he conforms to the rules of partition, the transaction will be valid by mutual agreement, without actual apportionment followed by possession; but if he does not conform to those rules, then he must deliver the share to each of the sharers, so as to make a valid gift to each.

Result of cases.

§ 416. A partition may be partial either as regards the persons making it, or the property divided. Any one coparcener may separate from the others, but no coparcener can compel the others to become separate among themselves. A father may separate from all or from some of his sons, remaining joint with the other sons, or leaving them to continue a joint family with each other (*k*). It was stated in two Bengal cases, that where one brother separates from the others, and these continue to live as a joint family, it must be presumed that there has been a complete separation of all the brothers, but that those who continue joint have re-united (*l*). But that seems to be merely a question of fact. If nothing appeared but that one brother had taken his share, and left the family, while the other brothers continued exactly as before, it seems to me the proper presumption would be, that there never had been any severance in their interests. It has been suggested by Messrs. West and Bühler that one Bombay decision (of which they disapprove) lays down that a grandfather can by his will enforce a state of division among his grandsons. The case referred to appears to me only to decide, that property may be devised in such a way that the persons to whom it is bequeathed, if they take it under the will, will take it in severalty and not as joint tenants (*m*). Such a state of

Where only
some divide.

Division
directed.

(*k*) Mitāksharā, i. 2, § 2; W. & B. 300.

(*l*) *Jadub Chunder v. Benodbehari*, 1 Hyde, 214; *Petamber v. Hurish Chunder*, 15 W. R. 200; *Kesabram v. Nund Kishore*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 7.

(*m*) W. & B. Introd. 301; *Lakshminibai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 150; 5 Bomb. O. C. 128.

things would be quite consistent with their remaining undivided in other respects. Whether a grandfather could so bequeath property would depend upon the nature of his interest in it. If it was his own exclusive property, of course he could devise it on any terms he liked. But if it was ancestral property, which would by law descend to his grandsons as coparceners, I doubt whether he could by his will compel them to accept it with the incidents of separate property.

All must be parties to suit.

Even where the division is only between certain members of the family, it is necessary that all the members should be parties to it, as the interests of all are necessarily affected by the separation of any. And if the partition is effected by decree of Court, all the members must be brought before the Court, either as plaintiffs or defendants (*n*).

Partition should be complete.

§ 417. Every suit for a partition should embrace all the joint family property (*o*), unless different portions of it lie in different jurisdictions, in which case suits may be brought in the different Courts to which the property is subject (*p*); or unless some portion of it is at the time incapable of partition (*q*). And if a member sues for partition of property in the hands of the defendant, he must bring into hotchpot any undivided property held by himself, and thus make a complete and final partition (*r*). Hence, where there has been a partition at all, the presumption is that it was a complete one, and that it embraced the whole of the family property. Therefore if property is afterwards found in the exclusive possession of one member of the family, and it is alleged that such property is still undivided and divisible, the proof of such an allegation rests upon the party

Partition presumed to be complete;

(*n*) *Narsimha v. Ramchendra*, 1 Mad. Dec. 52; *Pahaladh Singh v. Mt. Luchmunbutty*, 12 W. R. 256.

(*o*) *Manu*, ix. § 47; *Dadjee v. Wittul*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 151; *Dasari v. Dasari*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 86; *Ruttun Monee v. Brojo Mohun*, 22 W. R. 333; *Nanabhai v. Nathabai*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 46; *per curiam*, ib. 178, affirming 2 W. & B. Introd. 17; *Trimbak v. Narayan*, 11 Bomb. 71. See *per Phear, J.*, *Strimati Padmamani v. Strimati Jagadamba*, 6 B. L. R. 140, *sed qq.*?

(*p*) *Lutchmana Row v. Terimul Row*, 4 Mad. Jur. 241; *Subba Rau v. Rama Rau*, 3 Mad. H. C. 376.

(*q*) *Pattaravy v. Audimula*, 5 Mad. H. C. 419; *Narayan v. Pandurang*, 12 Bomb. 148.

(*r*) *Ram Lochun v. Rugbhour*, 15 W. R. 111; *Laljeet Singh v. Rajcoomar*, 25 W. R. 353.

making it (s). But there may be a partial division, of such a nature that the coparcenary ceases as to some of the property, and continues as to the rest. Where such a state of things exists, the rights of inheritance, alienation, &c., differ, according as the property in question belongs to the members in their divided, or in their undivided capacity (t); or there may be such a partition as amounts to an absolute severance of the coparcenary between the members, although the whole or part of the property is for convenience, or other reasons, left still unapportioned, and in joint enjoyment. In that case the interest of each member is divided, though the property is undivided. That interest, therefore, will descend, and may be dealt with as separate property (u). Or, lastly, there may be a partition and distribution which is intended to be final, but some part of the family property may have been overlooked, or fraudulently kept out of sight. In such a case, when the property is discovered it will be the subject of a fresh distribution, being divided among the persons who were parties to the original partition, or their representatives; that is, among the persons to whom each portion would have descended as separate property (x). But the former distribution will not be opened up again (y). Where, however, the whole scheme of distribution is fraudulent, and especially where it is in fraud of a minor, it will be absolutely set aside, unless the person injured has acquiesced in it, after full knowledge that it was made in violation of his rights (z).

may be partial,

or imperfect,

or mistaken.

Case of fraud.

How effected.

§ 418. FOURTH.—As to what constitutes a partition, it is undisputed that it may be effected without any instrument in writing (a). Numerous circumstances are set out by the

(s) *Narayan v. Nana Manohur*, 7 Bomb. A. C. 153.

(t) *Patni Mal v. Ray Manohur*, 5 S. D. 349 (410); *Maccunilas v. Ganpatrao*, Perry, O. C. 143; 1 W. & B. 6, 7; F. MacN. 46; 2 Stra. H. L. 387; 1 W. MacN. 53.

(u) *Appovier v. Rama Subbaiyan*, 11 M. I. A. 75; *Rewun Pershad v. Mt. Radha Beeby*, 4 M. I. A. 137, 168; *Narayan v. Lakshmi Ammal*, 3 Mad. H. C. 289.

(x) *Manu*, ix. § 218; *Mitāksharā*, i. 9, § 1—3; *Dāya Bhāga*, xiii. § 1—3; V. May., iv. 6, § 3; *Lachman Singh v. Sanwal Singh*, 1 All. 543; *ante*, § 409.

(y) *Dāya Bhāga*, xiii. § 6; 3 Dig. 400.

(z) *Vṛihaspati*, 3 Dig. 399; *Manu*, ix. § 47; *Dāya Bhāga*, xiii. § 5; Mad. Dec. of 1859, 84; *Moro Visvanath v. Ganesh Vithal*, 10 Bomb. 444.

(a) *Per curiam*, 4 M. I. A. 168.

Intention
essential.

Apportionment
unnecessary.

native writers as being more or less conclusive of a partition having taken place, such as separate food, dwelling, or worship; separate enjoyment of the property; separate income and expenditure; business transactions with each other, and the like (*b*). But all these circumstances are merely evidence, and not conclusive evidence of the fact of partition. Partition is a new *status*, which can only arise where persons, who have hitherto lived in coparcenary, intend that their condition as coparceners shall cease. It is not sufficient that they should alter the mode of holding their property. They must alter, and intend to alter their title to it. They must cease to become joint owners, and become separate owners (*c*). And as, on the one hand, the mere cesser of commensality and joint worship, the existence of separate transactions (*d*), the division of income (*e*), or the holding of land in separate portions (*f*), do not establish partition, unless such a condition was adopted with a view to partition (*g*); so, on the other hand, if the members of the family have once agreed to become separate in title, it is not necessary that they should proceed to a physical separation of the particular pieces of their property. "If there be a conversion of the joint tenancy of an undivided family into a tenancy in common of the members of that undivided family, the undivided family becomes a divided family with reference to the property that is the subject of that agreement, and that is a separation in interest and in right, although not immediately followed by a *de facto* actual division of the subject-matter. This may at any time be claimed by virtue of the separate right" (*h*). And in pro-

(*b*) Nārada, xiii. § 36—43; Mitāksharā, ii. 12; Dāya Bhāga, xiv.; 3 Dig. 407—429; 2 W. MacN. 170, n. See *Hurish Chunder v. Mokhoda*, 17 W. R. 564. As to the effect of separate performance of religious rites, see Goldstücker, Administration of Hindu Law, 53.

(*c*) Mere petitions or declarations of intention are not sufficient. *Mookta Keshee v. Oomabutty*, 14 W. R. 31.

(*d*) 4 M. I. A. 168; 12 M. I. A. 540; *Mt. Anundee v. Khedoo Lall*, 14 M. I. A. 412; *Chabila Manchand v. Jadavbai*, 3 Bomb. O. C. 87; *Narraina v. Veeraraghava*, Mad. Dec. of 1855, 230; *Garikapati v. Sudam*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 101; *Kristappa v. Ramasawmy*, 8 Mad. H. C. 25.

(*e*) *Sonatun Bysack v. Streemuttee Juggutsoondery*, 8 M. I. A. 66.

(*f*) *Kunjeet Singh v. Koor Gujraj*, 1 I. A. 9; *Ambika Dat v. Lukhmani Kuar*, 1 All 437.

(*g*) *Ram Kissen v. Sheonundun*, P. C. 23, W. R. 412.

(*h*) *Appovier v. Rama Subbaiyan*, 11 M. I. A. 75; *Suraneni v. Suraneni*, 13 M. I. A. 113; *Doorga Pershad v. Mt. Kundun*, 1 I. A. 55.

vinces governed by the Mitāksharâ, if a brother so divided should die before actual separation of the property, his widow would succeed to his share (i). On the same principle a decree for a partition dissolves the joint tenure from its date; and it does so equally, although the suit was not in terms a suit for partition, provided the relief given is inconsistent with the continuance of the joint interest (j). And any arrangement by which one member of the family abandons his rights to a share amounts to a partition in respect to the property so abandoned, even though he takes no specific portion in its place (k).

§ 419. REUNION among coparceners, though provided for by the text-books, is of very rare occurrence. Sir F. MacNaghten states that the Pandits of the Supreme Court of Bengal told him, that no instance of the sort had ever fallen within their knowledge, nor had he himself ever met with a case (l). It is obvious that the same reasons which make partitions more frequent will tend to remove all motives for reunion.

Rarity of reunion.

The leading text on this subject is that of Vṛihaspati. "He who being once separated dwells again through affection with his father, brother, or paternal uncle, is termed reunited." This text is interpreted literally by the Mitāksharâ, and the authorities of Southern India and Bengal, as excluding reunion with other relations, such as a nephew, cousin, or the like (m). The writers of the Mithilâ school take these words, not as importing a limitation, but as offering an example. Vachespâti says, "The first principle of reunion is the common consent of both the parties; and it may either be with the coheirs or with a stranger after the partition of wealth (n)." The Mayūkha agrees with him so far as to hold that other persons besides those named by Vṛihaspati may reunite; for instance, "a

Who may reunite.

(i) *Gajapathy v. Gajapathy*, 13 M. I. A. 497.

(j) *Joy Narain v. Grish Chunder*, 5 I. A. 228; *Chidambaram v. Gouri Nachiar*, 6 I. A., 177.

(k) *Balkrishna v. Savitribai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 54; *Periasawmi v. Periasawmi*, 5 I. A. 61.

(l) F. MacN. 107.

(m) Mitāksharâ, ii. 9, § 3; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xii. § 1; Dāya Bhāga, xii. § 3, 4; D. K. S. v. § 4.

(n) Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 301; D. K. S. v. § 5.

Who may
reunite.

wife, a paternal grandfather, a brother's grandson, a paternal uncle's son, and the rest also." But it restricts the reunion to the persons who made the first partition (o). This view is followed in Bombay, where it has been held "that the meaning of the passage of Vṛihaspati, which is the foundation of the law, is, that the reunion must be made by the parties, or some of them, who made the separation. If any of their descendants think fit to unite, they may do so; but such a union is not a reunion in the sense of the Hindu law, and does not affect the inheritance" (p). No such limitation is to be found in any of the other early writers, who only mention reunion with reference to the law of inheritance. Dr. Mayr looks upon it as an innovation, which grew out of a feeling that it was unjust that a man, by reunion with distant relations, should disappoint the claims of those who would otherwise have succeeded to him, in the event of his dying without issue (q).

Evidence.

§ 420. As the presumption is in favour of union until a partition is made out, so after a partition the presumption would be against a reunion. To establish it, it is necessary to show, not only that the parties already divided lived or traded together, but that they did so with the intention of thereby altering their *status*, and of forming a joint estate with all its usual incidents (r). The circumstance that one of the dividing parties, being a minor, continued to live on in apparent union with his father, would not be conclusive, or I should imagine, even *primâ facie* evidence of a reunion (s).

Its effect.

The effect of a reunion is simply to replace the re-uniting coparceners in the same position as they would have been in if no partition had taken place. But with regard to rights of inheritance, there seems to be some distinction between co-parceners in a state of original union, and of reunion. These will be discussed hereafter (§ 502).

(o) V. Mayr., iv. 9, § 1.

(p) *Visvanath v. Krishnaji*, 3 Bomb. A. C. 69; *Lakshmibai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 166.

(q) Mayr. 130.

(r) 3 Dig. 512; *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, xii. § 2; *Prankishen v. Mothooramohun*, 10 M. I. A. 403; *Gopal Chunder v. Kenaram*, 7 W. R. 35; *Ram Hurree v. Trihee Ram Surmah*, 15 W. R. 442.

(s) *Kuta Bully v. Kuta Chudappa*, 2 Mad. H. C. 235.

CHAPTER XVI.

INHERITANCE.

Principles of Succession in Case of Males.

§ 421. WE have now reached that point in the development of Hindu law in which Inheritance, properly so called, becomes possible. So long as the Joint Family continued in its original purity, its property passed into the hands of successive owners, but no recipient was in any sense the heir of the previous possessor (§ 243). The Bengal law made considerable inroads upon this system by allowing the share of each member to pass to his own direct heirs or assignees, and in this manner even to pass out of the family (a). But the rule of survivorship still governed the devolution of the share where a coparcener left no near heirs, and determined its amount. When, however property came to belong exclusively to its possessor, either as being his own self-acquisition, or in consequence of his having separated himself from all his coparceners, or having become the last of the coparcenary, then it passed to his heir properly so-called. It must always be remembered, that the law of Inheritance applies exclusively to property which was held in absolute severalty by its last male owner. His heir is the person who is entitled to the property, whether he takes it at once, or after the interposition of another estate. If the next heir to the property of a male is himself a male, then he becomes the head of the family, and holds the property either in severalty or in coparcenary (§ 241) as the case may be. At his death the devolution of the property is traced from him. But if the property of a male descends to a female, she does not become a fresh stock of descent. At

Inheritance
assumes separate
property.

(a) *Ante*, § 398, 403.

her death it passed not to her heirs, but to the heirs of the last male holder. And if that heir is also a female, at her death, it reverts again to the heir of the same male, until it ultimately falls upon a male who can himself become the starting point for a fresh line of inheritance (*b*).

Succession never
in abeyance.

§ 422. The right of succession under Hindu law is a right which vests immediately on the death of the owner of the property (*c*). It cannot under any circumstances remain in abeyance in expectation of the birth of a preferable heir, not conceived at the time of the owner's death. A child who is in the mother's womb at the time of the death is, in contemplation of law, actually existing, and will, on his birth, divest the estate of any person with a title inferior to his own, who has taken in the meantime (*d*). So, under certain circumstances, will a son who is adopted after the death (*e*). But in no other case will an estate be divested by the subsequent birth of a person who would have been a preferable heir if he had been alive at the time of the death (*f*). And the rightful heir is the person who is himself the next of kin at that time. No one can claim through or under any other person who has not himself taken. Nor is he disentitled because his ancestor could not have claimed. For instance, under certain circumstances a daughter's son would be heir, and would transmit the whole estate to his issue. But if he died before his grandfather, his son would never take. So, again, a sister's son will inherit in certain events, though his mother would never inherit. And the son of a leper or a lunatic, or of a son who has been disinherited for some lawful cause, will inherit, though his father could not (*g*).

(*b*) See this subject discussed, *post*, § 523, *et seq.*

(*c*) Retirement into a religious life, when absolute, amounts to civil death; 1 *Stra. H. L.* 185; 2 *Dig.* 525; *V. Darp.* 10. As to the presumption that death has taken place, see *Act I of 1872*, ss. 107, 108.

(*d*) *Per curiam*, 9 *B. L. R.* 397; *Lakhi Priya v. Bhairab Chandra*, 5 *S. D.* 315 (369); *Mt. Beroghah v. Nubokissen*, *Sev.* 238.

(*e*) *Ante*, § 169—176.

(*f*) *Aulim Chand v. Bejai Govind*, 6 *S. D.* 224 (278); *Kesub Chunder v. Bishnopersaud*, *S. D.* of 1860, ii. 340; *Bamasoondery v. Anund Moyee*, 1 *W. R.* 353; *Kalidas v. Krishan Chandra*, 2 *B. L. R.*, *F. B.* 103. These cases must be taken, as overruling others which will be found at 2 *W. MacN.* 84, 98; 1 *S. D.* 324 (434); 5 *S. D.* 46 (50); 6 *S. D.* 234 (291), and note.

(*g*) See *per Holloway, J.*, 6 *Mad. H. C.* 287, 288; *Balkrishna v. Savitribai*, 3 *Bomb. L. R.* 54; and *post*, §§ 479, 490, 455, 515.

§ 423. The principle upon which one person succeeds to another is generally stated to depend on his capacity for benefiting that person by the offering of funeral oblations. As the Judicial Committee remarked in one case, "There is in the Hindu law so close a connection between their religion and their succession to property that the preferable right to perform the *Shradh* is commonly viewed as governing also the preferable right to succession of property; and as a general rule they would be expected to be found in union (*h*)."

I have already (§ 9) suggested that this principle, while universally true in Bengal, is by no means such an infallible guide elsewhere. The question is not only most interesting as a matter of history, but most important as determining practical rights. I shall therefore proceed to examine the principles which determine the order of succession both under the *Dāya Bhāga* and the *Mitāksharā*. In this enquiry I shall reverse the usual order, and examine first the modern or Bengal system (*i*). When we have seen what is the logical result of the doctrine of religious efficacy, it will be easier to ascertain how far that doctrine can be applicable under a system where no such results are admitted.

Principle of religious efficacy.

§ 424. A Hindu may present three distinct sorts of offering to his deceased ancestors; either the entire funeral cake, which is called an undivided oblation, or the fragments of that cake which remain on his hands, and are wiped off it, which is called a divided oblation, or a mere libation of water. The entire cake is offered to the three immediate paternal ancestors, *i.e.*, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. The wipings, or *lepa*, are offered to the three paternal ancestors next above those who receive the cake, *i.e.*, the persons who stand to him in the fourth, fifth, and sixth degree of remoteness. The libations of water are offered to paternal ancestors ranging seven degrees beyond those who receive the *lepa*, or fourteen degrees in all from

Funeral offerings.

(*h*) 12 M. I. A. 96; see too *per curiam*, 9 M. I. A. 610; 12 M. I. A. 541; 9 B. L. R. 394.

(*i*) The whole doctrine of religious efficacy has been most elaborately discussed, especially by the late Mr. Justice Dwarkanauth Mitter, in some decisions of the Bengal High Court, to which I shall frequently refer. *Amrita Kumari v. Lakhinarayan*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 28; *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lall*, 5 B. L. R. 15; *Gobind Proshad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. L. R. 35.

Sapinda.
Sakulya.
Samānodaka.

Theory of
relationship.

the offerer ; some say as far as the family name can be traced. The generic name of *sapinda* is sometimes applied to the offerer and his six immediate ancestors, as he and all of these are connected by the same cake, or *pinḍa*. But it is more usual to limit the term *sapinda* to the offerer and the three who receive the entire cake. He is called the *sakulya* of those to whom he offers the fragments, and the *samānodaka* of those to whom he presents mere libations of water (*k*). Now, upon first reading this statement, one would suppose the theory of descent to be this : that a deceased owner was related in a primary and special degree to persons in the three grades of descent next below himself ; in a secondary, and less special degree, to persons in the three grades below the former three ; and in a still more remote manner, to a third class of persons extending to the fourteenth degree of descent. But the actual theory is much more complicated. In the first place, sapinda-ship is mutual. He who receives offerings is the sapinda of those who present them to him, and he who presents offerings is the sapinda of the person who receives them. Therefore every man stands as the centre of seven persons, six of whom are his sapindas, though not all the sapindas of each other. He is equally the sapinda of the three above, and of the three below him. Further, a deceased Hindu does not merely benefit by oblations which are offered to himself. He also shares in the benefit of oblations which are not offered to him at all, provided they are presented to persons to whom he was himself bound to offer them while he was alive. As Mr. Justice Mitter said, "If two Hindus are bound during the respective terms of their natural life to offer funeral oblations to a common ancestor or ancestors, either of them would be entitled after his death to participate in the oblations offered by the survivor to that ancestor or ancestors ; and hence it is that the person who offers those oblations, the person to whom they are offered, and the person who participates in them, are recognized as sapindas of each other" (*l*).

(*k*) Manu, iii. § 122—125, 215, 216 ; v. § 60 ; ix. § 186, 187 ; Baudhāyana, i. 5, § 1 ; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 37—42 ; Colebrooke, Essays (ed. 1858), 90, 101—117.

(*l*) 5 B. L. R. 39, citing Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 38. See too the Nirṇaya Sindhu, cited 2 B. L. R., F. B. 34, and *per Mitter*, J., 2 B. L. R., F. B. 32 ; 3 Dig. 453.

§ 425. The sapinḍas just described are all *agnates*, that is persons connected with each other by an unbroken line of male descent. But there are other sapinḍas who are *cognates*, or connected by the female line. The only definition of the cognate, or *bandhu* (if it may be called one), is that contained in the Mitāksharâ, ii. 5, § 3, last clause: "For *bhinna-gotra sapinḍas* are indicated by the term *bandhu*," or as Mr. Colebrooke translates it, "For kinsmen sprung from a different family, but connected by funeral oblations (*m*), are indicated by the term cognate." Now the mode in which cognates come to be connected with the agnates by funeral oblations is by means of that ceremony which is called the *Pârvvaṇa Çhrâddha*, and which is one of the principal of the series of offerings to the dead. "This ceremony consists in the presentation of a certain number of oblations, namely, one to each of the first three ancestors in the paternal line and maternal lines respectively; or, in other words, to the father, the grandfather, and the great-grandfather in the one line, and the maternal grandfather, the maternal great-grandfather, and the maternal great-great-grandfather in the other" (*n*). This would give one explanation of the texts which state that sapinḍaship does not extend on the side of the father beyond the seventh degree, and on the mother's side beyond the fifth (*o*). The sapinḍa who offers a cake as *bandhu* is the fifth in descent from the most distant maternal ancestor to whom he offers it. Now, on the principle of participation already stated, any bandhu who offers a cake to his maternal ancestors will be the sapinḍa, not only of those ancestors, but of all other persons whose duty it was to offer cakes to the same ancestors. But the maternal ancestors of A. may be the paternal or maternal ancestors of B., and in this manner A.

Agnates. ✓

Cognates. ✓

Bandhus.

Pârvvaṇa
Çhrâddha.

(*m*) It will be seen hereafter that it is more than doubtful whether Vijñāneśvara in using the term *sapinḍa* intended to refer to funeral oblations at all. See *post*, § 434—437.

(*n*) *Per* Mr. Justice Mitter, 5 B. L. R. 40; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 6, § 13, 19; Manu, ix. § 132; 3 Dig. 165, note by Colebrooke. It will be observed that the paternal ancestors are counted inclusive of the father; the maternal exclusive of the mother. See too Dattaka Mimāṃsā, iv. § 72, note by Sutherland.

(*o*) Vṛihat Manu, cited Dattaka Mimāṃsā, vi. § 9; Gautama, ib. § 11; Yājñavalkya, i. § 53. It is more probable, however, that the original texts simply stated an arbitrary rule as to the degree of affinity which excluded intermarriage. See *post*, § 434.

will be the *bandhu*, or *bhinna-gotra sapinda* of B., both being under an obligation to offer to the same persons.

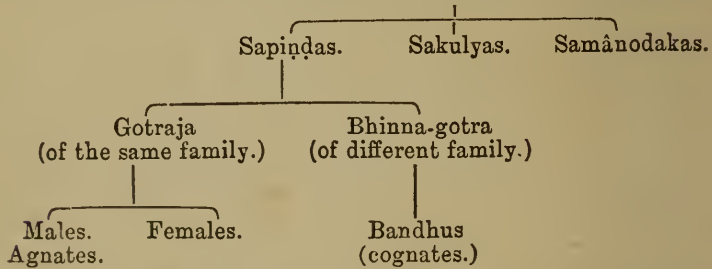
Relationship to females.

§ 426. Lastly. Although here I am anticipating the next chapter, a man is the *sapinda* of his mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother for a double reason; first, because they become part of the body of their respective husbands, and next, because the cakes which are offered to a man's male ancestors are also shared in by their respective wives (*p*). And so the wife is the *sapinda* of her husband; both as being the surviving half of his body, and because in the absence of male issue she performs the funeral obsequies (*q*).

Females.

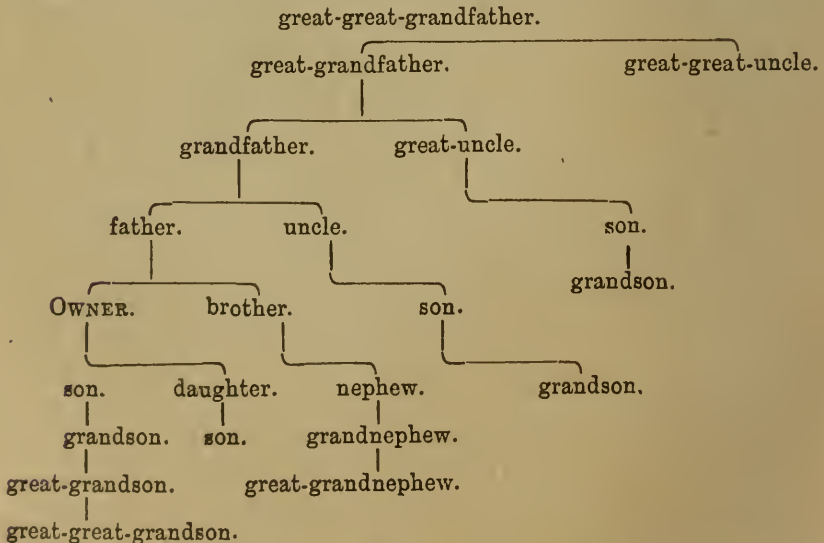
Tables of descent.

Hence the table of descents will stand as follows :—



Gotraja sapindas.

§ 427. This will all be made clearer by reference to the accompanying diagrams. The owner, who is called in the *Dāya Bhāga* the middlemost of seven, is the *sapinda* of his own

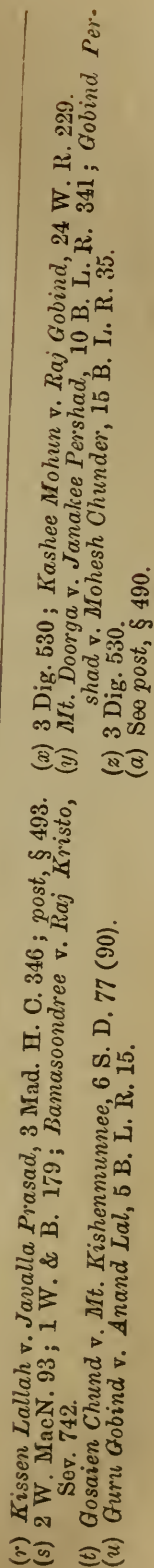


son, grandson, and great-grandson, because they offer the cake

(*p*) Manu, ix. § 45; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 6, § 3; 3 Dig. 519, 598, 625; Colebrooke, Essays, 116; 2 Bomb. L. R. 420, 440, 445.

(*q*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 1, § 5, 6; *Vivāda Chintāmañi*, 290.

BANDHUS EX PARTE PATERNÂ.



(r) *Kissen Lallah v. Javalla Prasad*, 3 Mad. H. C. 346; post, § 493.
 (s) 2 W. MacN. 93; 1 W. & B. 179; *Bamasoondree v. Raj Kristo*,
 Sev. 742.

(t) *Gosaien Chund v. Mt. Kishenmunnee*, 6 S. D. 77 (90).
(u) *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lal*, 5 B. L. R. 15.

(x) 3 Dig. 530; *Kashee Mohun v. Raj Gobind*, 24 W. R. 229.
 (y) *Mt. Doorga v. Janakee Pershad*, 10 B. L. R. 341; *Gobind Pershad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. I. R. 35.
 (z) 3 Dig. 530.
 (a) See post, § 490.

Sapindas and
sakulyas.

to him, and they are his *sapindas*, as he receives it from them. But his great-great-grandson is only his *sakulya*. So also he is the *sapinda* of his own father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, because he offers the cake to them, and they are his *sapindas*, because they receive it from him. But he and his great-great-grandfather are only *sakulyas* to each other. Next as regards collaterals. The owner receives no cake from his own brother, but he participates in the benefit of the cakes which the brother offers to his own three direct ancestors, who are also the three ancestors to whom the owner is bound to make offerings. So the nephew offers cake to his own three ancestors, two of whom are the father and grandfather of the owner; and the grandnephew to his three ancestors, one of whom is the father of the owner. All of these, therefore, are the *sapindas* of the owner, though they vary in religious efficacy in the ratio of three, two, and one. But the highest ancestor to whom the great-grandnephew offers cakes is the brother of the owner. He is therefore not a *sapinda*; but he is a *sakulya*, because he presents divided offerings to the owner's three immediate ancestors. Similarly the owner's uncle and great-uncle present cakes to two and one respectively of the ancestors to whom the owner is bound to present them. They are therefore his *sapindas*. But the great-great-uncle is not a *sapinda*, since he is himself the son of a *sakulya*, and presents cakes to persons all of whom stand in the relation of *sakulya* to the owner.

Bandhus.

§ 428. We now come to the *bandhus*, whose relationship is more complicated. There are two classes of *bandhus* referred to by the Bengal writers, and who alone can be brought within the doctrine of religious efficacy (*b*); those *ex parte paternâ* and *ex parte maternâ*. The first class will be found in the accompanying pedigree. Their *sapindaship* arises from the fact that they offer cakes to their maternal ancestors, who are also the paternal ancestors of the owner. For instance, the sister's son, in addition to the oblations which he presents to his own father, &c., presents oblations

(b) *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 6, § 8—20; D. K. S. i. 10, § 1—20. As to other *bandhus*, see *post*, § 437.

to the three ancestors of his own mother, who are also the three ancestors of the owner. The aunt's son presents them to two, and the grandaunt's son to one of his three ancestors. These persons, therefore, all come within the definition of *bandhus*, as being persons of a different family, connected by funeral oblations, though with different degrees of religious merit. But the great-grandaunt's son is not a *bandhu*, because the ancestors to whom he presents cakes are the *sakulyas* only of the owner. Following out the same principle, it will be seen that the grandsons by the female line of the uncle and the granduncle, of the brother and the nephew, are all *bandhus*. But the son of the grandnephew's daughter is not a *bandhu*. Similarly in the descending line, the sons of the owner's daughter, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter are *bandhus*, as they all present cakes to himself. But the offerings made by the son of his great-great-granddaughter do not reach as far as the owner, and therefore he is not a *bandhu*. It will be observed that the above pedigree always stops with the son of the female relation. The reason of this will be seen on referring to the smaller pedigree in the same sheet. The grandson of the owner's daughter will present cakes to his own paternal ancestors, that is to the owner's grandson, and to X. and Y., and also to his own maternal ancestors, that is to B., C., and D. But none of these are persons to whom the owner is bound to make oblations, and five of them are complete strangers to him. And so, of course, it is in every other similar case.

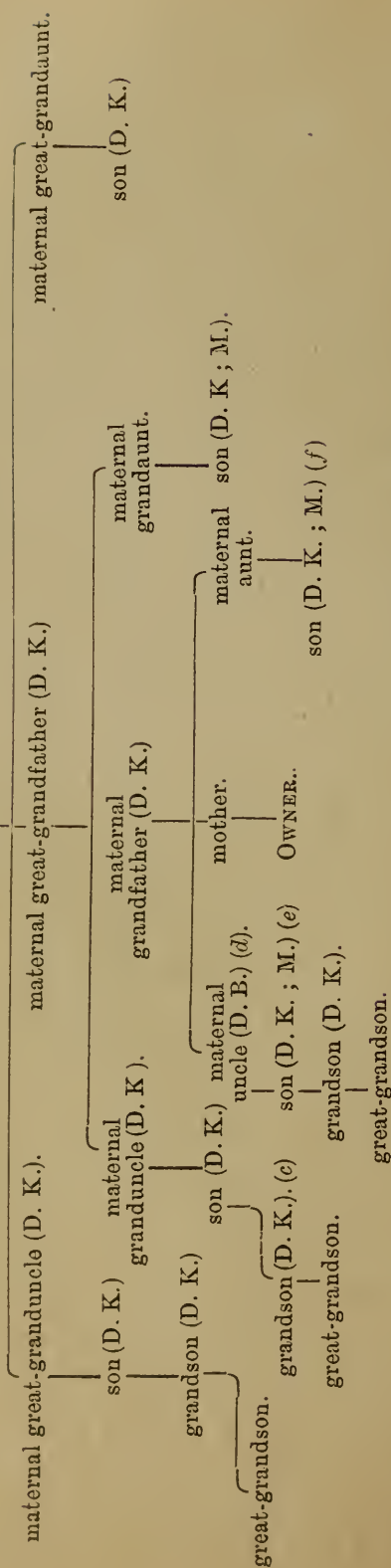
Bandhus ex
parte paternâ.

§ 429. The *bandhus ex parte maternâ* will be found in the next pedigree. They differ from those just described in being connected with the owner through his maternal ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Those on the left side of the pedigree are the agnates of these maternal ancestors, while those on the right side are cognates, and are therefore removed from the owner by a double descent in the female line. The explanations already given will render it unnecessary to go through the table in detail. The owner is bound to offer cakes to his own maternal grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, and there-

Bandhus ex
parte maternâ.

No. II.
BANDHUS EX PARTE MATERNÂ.

Maternal great-great-grandfather (D. K.).



(c) *Brajakishor v. Radha Gobind*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 435.

(d) *Gridhari Lall v. Bengal Government*, 12 M. I. A. 448.

(e) *Roopchurn v. Anund Lall*, 2 S. D. 35 (45); *Strinutty Debia v. Rani Koond*, 4 M. I. A. 292; *Mt. Kasse v. Goluckchunder*, S. D. of 1848, 28.

(f) *Dejanath v. Muthoor Nath*, 6 S. D. 27 (30); *Rutcheputty Dutt v. Rajender*, 2 M. I. A. 132.

fore the other persons who make similar offerings to them, or to any of them, are his *bandhus*. All the males in the table except the great-grandsons on the left are such *bandhus*.

§ 430. The letters D. B., D. K. and M., attached to the steps in the above pedigrees, point out which of the persons there described are specifically enumerated by the Dâya Bhâga, Dâya-krahma-sangraha and Mitâksharâ. It will be observed that very few are set out by Vijñaneśvara; that many unnoticed by him are named by the Dâya Bhâga, and still more which are omitted by the Dâya Bhâga are supplied by the Dâya-krahma-sangraha; but that in table No. I. many are wholly passed over who yet come within the definition of *bandhu*, and are even more nearly related than those who are expressly mentioned. The daughter's son is really only a *bandhu*, though he is always placed in a distinct category on grounds which will be stated hereafter (§ 477). But the sons of the granddaughter and great-granddaughter offer oblations direct to the owner himself, which no other *bandhu* does except the daughter's son. Obviously, therefore, they should rank before *bandhus* who only offer to the owner's ancestors. So the son of the grandniece is omitted, though he stands in exactly the same relation to the son of the niece, who is included, as the grandnephew does to the nephew (*g*). At one time it was supposed that no *bandhu* could be recognized who was not expressly named in the authorities which governed each province. On this ground the sister's son (*h*), and the granduncle's daughter's son were rejected in Madras (*i*); and the sons of the granddaughter and great-granddaughter (*k*), and the son of the uncle's daughter in Bengal (*l*). But it is now settled, after an unusually full discussion of the whole subject, that the examples given in the different commentaries are illustrative and not exhaustive, and that if any one comes within the

Enumeration is not exhaustive.

(*g*) His title has recently been affirmed, *Kashee Mohun v. Raj Gobind*, 24 W. R. 229.

(*h*) See post, § 490.

(*i*) *Kissen Lallah v. Javalla Prasad*, 3 Mad. H. C. 346.

(*k*) 2 W. MacN. 81; contra, 3 Dig. 530.

(*l*) *Gobindo v. Woomesh Chunder*, W. R. Sp. No. 176, overruled by *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lall*, 5 B. L. R. 15.

definition of a *bandhu* he is entitled to succeed as such, although he is nowhere specifically named (*m*).

§ 432. I have now pointed out the manner in which the principle of religious efficacy applies to the different male heirs who are recognized by Bengal law. As to the grounds upon which one heir is preferred to another, the following rules may be laid down.

Principles of
precedence.

1. Each class of heirs takes before, and excludes the whole of the succeeding class. "The *sapiṇḍas* are allowed to come in before the *sakulyas*, because undivided oblations are considered to be of higher spiritual value than divided ones; and the *sakulyas* are in their turn preferred to the *samānodakas*, because divided oblations are considered to be more valuable than libations of water" (*n*).

2. The offering of a cake to any individual constitutes a superior claim to the acceptance of a cake from him, or the participation in cakes offered by him. On this ground the male issue, widow, and daughter's son rank above the ascendants, or the brothers who offer exactly the same number of cakes as the deceased (*o*).

3. Those who offer oblations to both paternal and maternal ancestors are superior to those who offer only to the paternal. Hence the preference of the whole to the half-blood (*p*).

4. "Those who are competent to offer funeral cakes to the paternal ancestors of the deceased proprietor, are invariably preferred to those who are competent to offer such cakes to his maternal ancestors only; and the reason assigned for the distinction is, that the first kind of cakes are of superior religious efficacy in comparison to the second." And this rule extends so far as to give a preference to one who offers a smaller number of the superior oblations over one who offers a larger number of the inferior sort (*q*).

(*m*) *Gridhari Lall v. Bengal Government*, 12 M. I. A. 448; *Amrita Kumari v. Lakhinarayen*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 28; *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lall*, 5 B. L. R. 15.

(*n*) *Per Mitter*, J., 5 B. L. R. 38; approved 15 B. L. R. 47.

(*o*) 3 Dig. 499, 503; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 1, § 32—40, 43; xi. 2, § 1, 2; xi. 5. § 3.

(*p*) 3 Dig. 480, 519; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 5, § 12.

(*q*) *Per Mitter*, J., 5 B. L. R. 39; *Gobind Proshad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. L. R. 35. See this case, *post*, § 496.

5. "Similarly those who offer larger numbers of cakes of a particular description are invariably preferred to those who offer a less number of cakes of the same description; and where the number of such cakes is equal, those that are offered to nearer ancestors are always preferred to those offered to more distant ones."

"The same remarks are equally applicable to the *sakulyas* and *samānodakas*" (r).

The result of these rules in Bengal is, that not only do all the *bandhus* come in before any of the *sakulyas* or *samānodakas*, but that the *bandhus* themselves are sifted in and out among the agnates, heirs in the female line frequently taking before very near *sapindas* in the direct male line, on the principle of superior religious efficacy (s). In fact, if the test of religious efficacy is once admitted, no other arrangement would be logically possible.

Cognates not postponed to Agnates.

§ 433. When we go a stage back to the *Mitāksharâ*, and still more to the actual usage of those districts where Brâhmanical influence was less felt, the whole doctrine of religious efficacy seems to disappear. In the chapters which treat of succession, the *Dâya Bhâga* and the *Dâya-krahmasangraha* appeal to that doctrine at every step, testing the claims of rival heirs by the numbers and nature of their respective offerings. The *Mitāksharâ* never once alludes to such a test. No doubt it refers to the distinction between *sapindas* and *samānodakas*, and states that the former succeed before the latter, and that the former offer the funeral cake, while the latter offer libations of water only. But this distinction is stated, not as evidencing different degrees of religious merit, but as marking different degrees of propinquity. The claims of rival heirs are determined by the latter test, not by the former. Persons who confer high religious benefits are postponed to persons who confer hardly any. Persons who confer none whatever are admitted as heirs, for no other reason than that of affinity.

Religious principle not the rule of the *Mitāksharâ*.

§ 434. Throughout the *Mitāksharâ* Mr. Colebrooke invari-

(r) *Per Mitter*, J., 5 B. L. R. 39; approved 15 B. L. R. 47; *Khettur Gopal v. Poorno Chunder*, 15 W. R. 482.

(s) *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 6; D. K. S. i. 10; 3 Dig. 528, 529. See *post*, § 495.

Meaning of
'sapiṇḍa.'

Sapiṇḍa de-
notes affinity.

ably translates the word *sapiṇḍa* by the phrase "connected by funeral oblations," and this gives the appearance of a continued reference by the author to religious rites. But there is every reason to suppose that, in using the word *sapiṇḍa*, Vijñaneśvara was thinking of propinquity, and not of religious offerings. In another part of his work, which has not been translated (*t*), where he is commenting on the text of Yājñavalkya (i. § 5) which forbids a man to marry his *sapiṇḍa*, he defines *sapiṇḍaship* solely as a matter of affinity, without any reference to the capacity to offer religious oblations, and so as to include cases where no such capacity exists. He says, "*sapiṇḍa* relationship arises between two people through their being connected by particles of the one body." Hence he states that a man is the *sapiṇḍa* of his paternal and maternal ancestors, and his paternal and maternal uncles and aunts. "So also the wife and the husband, because they together beget one body. In like manner brothers' wives are *sapiṇḍa* relations to each other, because they produce one body (the son) with those who have sprung from one body." He then observes that this principle, if carried to its extreme limits, would make the whole world akin, and proceeds to comment on the text of Yājñavalkya (*u*) as follows:—

"On the mother's side, in the mother's line, after the fifth, on the father's side, in the father's line, after the seventh (ancestor), the *sapiṇḍa* relationship ceases, and therefore the word *sapiṇḍa*, which on account of its etymological import (connected by having in common particles of one body) (*v*), would apply to all men, is restricted in its signification; and thus the six ascendants, beginning with the father, and the six descendants, beginning with

(*t*) It will be found in W. & B. 174. It is also referred to by Mr. Justice Mitter, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 33, and by Mr. Justice West, 8 Bomb. O. C. 262, and by Westropp, C. J., in 2 Bomb. 423.

(*u*) Yājñavalkya, i. § 52, 53. "A man should marry a wife who is not his *sapiṇḍa*, one who is further removed from him than five degrees on the side of the mother, and seven degrees on the side of the father."

(*v*) *Sapiṇḍa* is compounded from *sa* for *samāna*, like, equal or the same, and *piṇḍa*, ball or lump. As applied to funeral rites the *piṇḍa* is the ball or lump into which the funeral cake was made up. I am informed by very high Sanskrit authorities that the application of the word *sapiṇḍa* in the text is peculiar to Vijñaneśvara.

the son, and one's-self (counted) as the seventh (in each case), are *sapiṇḍa* relations. In case of a division of the line also, one ought to count up to the seventh (ancestor), including him with whom the division begins (e.g., two collaterals, A. and B., are *sapiṇḍas*, if the common ancestor is not further removed from either of them than six degrees), and thus must the counting of the *sapiṇḍa* relationship be made in every case" (x).

§ 435. It will be remarked that in this passage the author does not notice the distinction between those who offer undivided oblations, and those who offer divided oblations. Nor does he in the corresponding part of his treatise on Inheritance (y), where he divides the *Gotraja*, or Gentiles, into two classes only—those connected by funeral oblations of food, extending to seven degrees, and those connected by libations of water, extending to the fourteenth degree, or even further.

Includes
sakulyas.

Theory of
relationship
according to the
Mitāksharā.

From this passage Messrs. West and Bühler draw the conclusions that, "1, Vijñaneśvara supposes the *sapiṇḍa* relationship to be based, not on the presentation of funeral oblations, but on descent from a common ancestor, and, in the case of females, also on marriage with descendants from a common ancestor; 2, That all blood-relations within six degrees, together with the wives of the males amongst them, are *sapiṇḍa* relations to each other (z)." And with reference to his definition of *bandhu* (Mitāksharā, ii. 5, § 3), they say, "It would seem that Vijñaneśvara interpreted Yājñavalkya's term *bandhu* as meaning relations within the sixth degree who belong to a different family;" or at least that all such persons who come under the term *sapiṇḍa*, according to the definition given in the *Āchāra-kanda*, are included in the term *bandhu* (a)."

(x) It is no doubt in reference to this passage that the Sāṃskāra Mayūkha, in a passage cited in the 2 Bomb., 425, says "Hence Vijñaneśvara and others abandoned the theory of connexion through the rice ball offering, and accepted the theory of transmission of constituent atoms."

(y) Mitāksharā, ii. 5.

(z) W. & B. 175. See too Dattaka Mimāṃsā, vi. § 10, 32, where the relation of *sapiṇḍa* is said to rest on two grounds, consanguinity and the offering of funeral oblations. This view of the doctrine of Mitāksharā, has been expressly adopted by the High Court of Bombay in the case of *Lallubhai v. Mankubhai*, 2 Bomb., 388, 423—432.

(a) W. & B. 201.

Agnates exclude
cognates.

Propinquity not
offerings the
test of heirship.

§ 436. This preference of consanguinity, or family relationship, to efficacy of religious offerings, is further shown by the rule laid down in the *Mitāksharā*, and the works which follow its authority, according to which the *bandhus*, or relations through a female, never take until the direct male line, down to and including the last *samānodaka*, has been exhausted (b). A stronger instance than this could not be imagined, since, as has been already shown, many of the *bandhus* are not only *sapīṇḍas*, but very close *sapīṇḍas*, while the fourteenth from a common ancestor is scarcely a relation at all, and certainly possesses religious efficacy of the most attenuated character. And so, whether the *Mitāksharā* agrees with the *Dāya Bhāga*, or disagrees with it, the reasons offered always show that the governing idea in the author's mind was that propinquity, not religious merit, was the test of heirship. For instance, *Jīmūta Vāhana* prefers the father to the mother, because he presents two oblations in which the deceased son participates, while the mother presents none (c). *Vijñaneśvara* takes exactly the opposite view, on the ground that, "since her propinquity is greatest, it is fit that she should take the estate in the first instance, conformably with the text 'to the nearest *sapīṇḍa* the inheritance next belongs.'" And he goes on to say, "Nor is the claim in virtue of propinquity restricted to *sapīṇḍas*, but, on the contrary, it appears from this very text that the rule of propinquity is effectual, without any exception, in the case of *samānodakas*, as well as other relatives, when they appear to have a claim to the succession" (d). So he agrees with *Jīmūta Vāhana* in preferring the whole blood, among brothers, to the half. But he rests his preference on the same text "to the nearest *sapīṇḍa*, &c.," saying, very truly, that "those of the half-blood are remote through the difference of mothers;" while the *Dāya Bhāga* grounds it on the religious principle, that the brother

(b) *Nārada*, xiii. § 51; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 5 and 6; *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, 297—299; *V. May.*, iv. 8, § 22; *Rutheputty Dutt v. Rajender Narain*, 2 M. I. A. 132; *Srimati Debia v. Koond Lutah*, 4 M. I. A. 292; *Bhyah Ram Singh v. Bhyah Ugur Singh*, 13 M. I. A. 373; *Thakoor Jeebnath Singh v. Court of Wards*, 2 I. A. 163. See also cases in the N. W. P., cited 5 B. L. R. 449; W. & B. 171.

(c) *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 3, § 3.

(d) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 3, § 3, 4.

of the whole-blood offers twice as many oblations in which the deceased participates, as the brother of the half-blood (e). So the right of a daughter to succeed, is rested by Jímûta Vâhana upon the funeral oblations which may be hoped for from her son, and the exclusion of widowed, or barren, or sonless daughters, is the natural result (f). The Mitâksharâ follows Vrihaspati in basing her claim upon simple consanguinity. "As a son, so does the daughter of a man proceed from his several limbs. How then should any other person take her father's wealth?" And he excludes neither the widowed nor the barren daughter, but prefers one to another, according as she is unmarried or married, poor or rich; that is, according as she has the best natural claim to be provided for (g).

§ 437. When we come to the enumeration of *bandhus*, in Bandhus.

Mitâksharâ, ii. 6, it appears pretty clear that they do not depend upon any such principle of community in religious offerings, as is supposed to be laid down in the definition at Mitâksharâ, ii. 5, § 3 (h). It is said, "Cognates are of three kinds; related to the person himself, to his father, or to his mother, as is declared by the following text:—'The sons of his own father's sister, the sons of his own mother's sister, and the sons of his maternal uncle, must be considered as his own cognate kindred. The sons of his father's paternal aunt, the sons of his father's maternal aunt, and the sons of his father's maternal uncle, must be deemed his father's cognate kindred. The sons of his mother's paternal aunt, the sons of his mother's maternal aunt, and the sons of his mother's maternal uncles, must be reckoned his mother's cognate kindred (i). Here, by reason of near affinity, the cognate kindred of the deceased himself are his successors in the first instance; on failure of them, his father's cognate kindred, or, if there be none, his mother's cognate kindred. This must be understood to be the order of suc-

Bandhus do not depend on religious merit.

(e) Mitâksharâ, ii. 4, § 5; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 5, § 12.

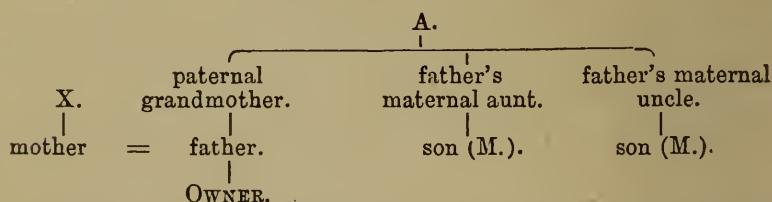
(f) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 2, § 1—3, 17. (g) Mitâksharâ, ii. 2, § 2—4.

(h) See ante, § 425, 435.

(i) This is the correct translation of the text. See 2 W. MacN. 96; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 5, § 14; 2 B. L. R., F. B. 37. In Mr. Colebrooke's translation the first clause obviously is incorrectly given.

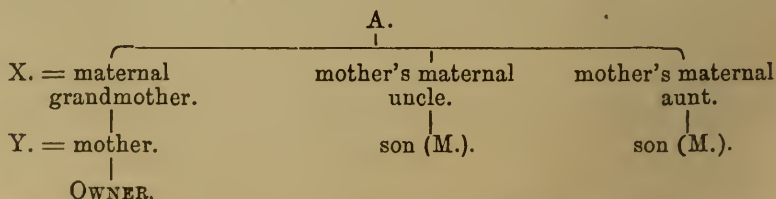
cession here intended." Now, if we look back to the pedigrees already given (§ 428, 429), we shall find that the sons of the father's sister, and the sons of the father's paternal aunt, come in among the *bandhus ex parte paternâ* of the Bengal scheme, and are indicated by the letter M. So the sons of his mother's sister, and of his maternal uncle, and of his mother's paternal aunt, come in among the *bandhus ex parte maternâ*, and are similarly indicated. The others named by the Mitâksharâ do not occur in those lists, and are nowhere referred to by any Bengal authority. The accompanying diagrams will show that they could not

Cognates
through father's
mother.



possibly be brought within any system which depends on religious merit. Here it will be seen that the sons of the father's maternal aunt, and of the father's maternal uncle, that is the father's cognate kindred on his mother's side, are only connected with the owner through his paternal grandmother. Now neither of these persons presents offerings to any one to whom the owner presents them. Their offerings are presented to A. and his ancestors. Those of the owner are presented to his father's line, and to his mother's line, that is, the line of X. (k). Consequently their offerings are neither shared in by the owner, nor do they operate in discharge of any duty which he is bound to perform. Similarly the sons of the mother's maternal uncle

Cognates
through
mother's
mother.



and aunt, that is the mother's cognate kindred, on *her*

(k) This is not only clear on principle (§ 425), but I have ascertained by inquiry from very learned natives both in Bengal and Madras, that a man is under no obligation to present any offerings to his grandmother's ancestors. See too Jagannâtha, 3 Dig. 602.

mother's side, are only connected with the owner through his maternal grandmother. The same observation as before applies to them. Their offerings are presented to A. and his line. Those of the owner are presented to the lines of Y. and X., that is, to his own male ancestors, and those of his mother. Here again there is no conceivable community of religious benefit. On the other hand, when we apply "the reason of near affinity," on which Vijñaneśvara himself bases the heirship, the whole thing is as simple as possible. The first of the three classes contains the owner's first cousins; the second contains his father's first cousins, and the third contains his mother's first cousins. All of these are postponed to the *samānodakas*, because they are connected through a female, and are therefore members of a different family from that of the owner. But when they are admitted, they are brought in upon natural principles. No other explanation can be required, except by those who persist in distorting the plain meaning of the Mitāksharā, in order to find in it something which never was there. The Bombay authorities even go farther than the letter of the Mitāksharā, as they include under the term *bandhu* females such as the daughters of a brother or of a sister, who can make no offerings at all (l).

§ 438. Let us now go a stage further back, and try to find out what was the original law as to religious obligations, and how far it was connected with the right of succession. I have already suggested that the practice of offerings to the dead was connected with that Ancestor worship, which was common to all the leading Áryan races (§ 59). Those offerings would necessarily be made by the direct male descendants of the deceased in the order of their nearness. The character of those offerings, and the strictness of the obligation to make them, would naturally vary according to the remoteness of the offerer from the ancestor. The rule, as we have seen (§ 424), was in accordance with what might have been expected. The devolution of the property would naturally be in exactly the same line, partly because the

Early principles
of succession.

(l) 1 W. & B. 178, 183. See *post*, § 501.

whole organization of the family would be broken up if its property were allowed to pass through females to persons of a different family or tribe (*m*); and partly because the direct males had a double claim, as being not only the descendants, but the worshippers of the deceased. Collateral relations through females who belonged to a different family, with a different line of ancestors, would be under no obligation to make offerings, and would have no right to inherit. Now this seems to be exactly what is laid down in the early treatises. The obligation to offer cakes, divided oblations and libations of water, is set out, and it is also said that the inheritance goes in order to the *sapinḍas*, *sakulyas*, and *samānodakas*. Immediately after these it passes to strangers, such as the spiritual preceptor, the pupil, learned Brāhmans, or the king (*n*). The only person of a different family who is ever stated to be under an obligation to perform funeral rites, or to have a right to inherit, is the daughter's son (*o*). But he is always treated as being in an exceptional position, the reasons for which will be discussed hereafter (§ 477); he does not take as a *bandhu*, which in strictness he is, but very high up in the line of agnates. It would appear then that a man did not inherit because he performed funeral rites, or made religious offerings. He inherited because he was the nearest of kin to the deceased, and he made religious offerings for exactly the same reason. In the majority of cases the heir to the estate would also be a person who was bound to offer the funeral cake. But the mere fact of succession to the estate would carry with it the obligation to perform all rites which were needed for the repose of the deceased, just as it entailed the duty of discharging his debts (*p*). Accordingly, when a pupil is heir, he performs the funeral rites, and it is stated generally,

Religious duty
the result, not
the cause of
inheritance.

(*m*) See Maine, *Ancient Law*, 149; *Punjab Customs*, 11, 16, 25, 37, 48, 51.

(*n*) *Manu*, ix. § 185—189; *Āpastamba*, ii. 14, § 2—5; *Baudhāyana*, i. 5, § 1—3; *Gautama*, xxviii. § 18; *Vāsishta*, xvii. § 29—31; *Vishnu*, xvii. § 4—16; *Nārada*, xiii. § 51. The word *bandhavas* in the last two authorities is translated by Mr. Colebrooke remoter kinsmen, and appears to refer to persons of the same family.

(*o*) *Manu*, ix. § 127—133, 139, 140.

(*p*) The due performance of sacrifices was one of the three debts. *Manu*, vi. § 35, 36.

"He who takes the estate shall perform the obsequies (*q*)."
Accordingly Mr. Colebrooke says, "It is not a maxim of the law that he who performs the obsequies is heir, but that he who succeeds to the property must perform them (*r*)."
And in a remark appended by him to the case of *Dutnarain v. Ajeet Singh* (*s*), he says, in reference to the texts just quoted, "These passages do not imply that the mere act of celebrating the funeral rites gives a title to the succession, but that the successor is bound to the due performance of the last rites for the person whose wealth has devolved on him." This is also the view taken by Dr. Mayr (*t*). He says, "The descent of the inheritance was not regulated by the offerings to the dead, as *Gans* supposes. Those offerings, and the whole system of ancestor-worship, date from a period at which the idea of a partition had not arisen. In later times, however, when partition was resorted to, it became necessary to define who should offer the funeral cake, and to whom it should be offered. Naturally this duty fell upon those who took the inheritance (*u*). In earlier times it would have been impossible to mark out any particular individual, because each succeeding generation stood in the relation of descendant to the whole generation which preceded it, and not any particular person to any other particular person. But when we find in a text of *Manu* that the great-grandson must offer the cake, we may infer that this duty resulted from the fact that he inherited."

§ 438A. The fact that the line of direct descent stopped short at the great-grandson, and then ascended, is generally looked upon as a crucial proof that the Hindu law of inheritance was founded on the principle of religious efficacy. The reason offered for this by the Bengal lawyers is, that those who are more remote in descent present offerings of less religious efficacy. But it seems to me that the matter

Great-grandson
the last direct
heir.

(*q*) *Vṛihaspati Smṛiti*, 3 Dig 545; *Vishṇu*, ib. 546; *Satātapa*, ib. 625; Goldstücker, 13; *per curiam*, 13 M. I. A. 390; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, xi. 5, § 10, note (2); but see *per Mitter*, J., 5 B. L. R. 38.

(*r*) 2 Stra. H. L. 242.

(*s*) 1 S. D. 20 (26).

(*t*) Ind. Erbrecht, 85.

(*u*) See Goldstücker, 36, *et seq.*, where he points out that all ceremonies involving expense must be performed by the head of the family, who is in possession of the property.

is capable of a very different explanation. When property no longer passed exclusively by survivorship, the rule of inheritance would naturally be framed upon the analogy of the original system. The right of succession would be limited to the same persons who formerly took by survivorship, but they would take by distinct steps, instead of simultaneously as one body. Now the persons upon whom the property fell by survivorship were the persons who lived together in the same house, or, at all events, who were so closely connected as to be under the control of one head. It was almost impossible that a single family could ever contain more than four generations in direct descent. If such were in existence, they would probably have quitted the family house. In any case the more remote would be looked upon as less nearly akin to the patriarch than his own brothers, nephews, or grandnephews. These last would be more closely united to him in affection, and more likely to interest themselves in the performance of his obsequies, where such performance was considered a matter of moment. It was natural, therefore, that the inheritance should be kept within the family, first passing to its lower extremity, and then rising again. This is really all that *Manu* says, "For three is the funeral cake ordained. The fourth is the giver. But the fifth has no concern. To the nearest after him in the third degree the inheritance belongs" (*x*). In the *Punjâb*, where, as I have often remarked, the doctrine of religious efficacy is unknown, the line of direct descent stops short in the same way, and those beyond the third generation from the common ancestor are considered to have no interest in the property which entitles them to object to its alienation (*y*). That is, they are practically considered to be outside the family. Mr. McLennan has drawn attention to the early Irish law, which appears in a somewhat similar manner to have limited the right of participation in the ancestral property to the fourth generation (*z*).

Punjâb.

Succession of
cognates.

§ 439. I have no information which would enable me to state whether the practice of making offerings to maternal ancestors always existed, or whether it was an innovation,

(*x*) *Manu*, ix, § 187.

(*y*) *Punjâb*, Cust. 32.

(*z*) McLennan, 471, 496.

springing from the Brâhmanical desire to multiply religious ceremonies, and from the principle that "wealth was produced for the sake of solemn sacrifices" (a). If it existed as a ceremonial usage, the absence of all reference to it in the law writers shows that it had no legal significance. One thing is quite clear, that it carried with it no right to inheritance, since the persons who presented such offerings could never inherit under the old system of law, until the extinction of the last male in the direct line of descent (§ 436). The Bengal notion of weighing the merits of an offering made by a cognate against an offering made by an agnate, and giving the inheritance accordingly, is an absolute innovation. The theory arose from treating the offering of oblations, and the succession to the estate as cause and effect, instead of antecedent and consequent. The offering of sacrifices to the deceased was really a duty. It grew to be considered the evidence of a right. When this idea became fixed, it was readily applied to all persons who presented such offerings, whatever might be the reason for their presentation. Those principles, which were applied in testing the title of persons who really were heirs, were applied to create a title in persons who were out of the line of heirs. An agnate who presented three cakes to the owner was necessarily nearer than an agnate who only presented one, and was therefore a preferable heir. It came to be assumed that this principle was not limited to agnates, but afforded a means of comparison between agnates and cognates. The application of this principle is the simple distinction between the Mitâksharâ and the Dâya Bhâga. The Mitâksharâ recognized the difference between the offerings which A. and B. were bound to make to X., but it used the difference in order to ascertain which of the two was nearer to X. in a direct line. The Dâya Bhâga considered the directness of the line as immaterial, if the difference between the offerings was established.

Origin of Bengal theory.

In the Punjâb, and among the Sikhs and Jains, the rules of descent appear to be in the main those of the Mitâksharâ, but the doctrine of religious efficacy is wholly unknown (b).

(a) Mitâksharâ, ii. 1, § 14. See *ante*, § 216. (b) Punjâb, Cust. 11; *ante*, § 44.

CHAPTER XVII.

INHERITANCE.

Principles of Succession in case of Females.

Early position of
women.

§ 440. THE right of women to possess and inherit the family property would necessarily depend upon the organization of the family to which they belonged. Among polyandrous tribes of the promiscuous or Nair type, the head and visible centre of the family was not the father, who was unknown, nor the wife, who had not begun to exist, but the mother (§ 205). The home was the home of the woman and her children. There she was visited by the man who might or might not be the father of her children. His home was in the circle to which his mother belonged. He inherited in one family and his children in another. In Canara, where this system is maintained in its most archaic form, the actual management of the property formerly was, and even now generally is, vested in females. In Malabar the manager is always the eldest male of the family, though succession is traced through females (a). Exactly the reverse would take place in the ordinary undivided family of the Áryan type. The whole property would vest in the males, and be managed by the head of the family for the time being. The women would be mere dependents upon their husbands and fathers. So long as there were any males in the family, no woman could possibly set up a claim to inherit. It is to this period that the texts must be referred which represent women as absolutely without independent rights. "Three persons, a wife, a son, and a slave, are declared by law to have no

(a) Stra. Man. § 400—404; *Munda Chetty v. Timmaju Hensu*, 1 Mad. H. C. 380; *Timmappa v. Mahalinga*, 4 Mad. H. C. 28. See Teulon, 25, where he gives an exactly similar description of the ancient Carians.

wealth exclusively their own; the wealth which they may earn is regularly acquired for the man to whom they belong" (b). "The father protects a woman in her childhood, the husband during her youth, the son in old age; a woman has no right to independence" (c). Baudhâyana and Vâsishṭa mention no females in their list of heirs, and the former expressly states, on the authority of a text of the Vedas, that women have no right to inherit (d). The text on which Baudhâyana relies may, it would appear, be so interpreted as to give no support to his assertion (e); but of course this does not detract from the weight to be given to his statement as evidence of the then prevailing usage. His authority is still so far respected, that the schools of Bengal and Benares consider that women can only inherit under some express text (f). In this respect, as it will be seen hereafter, the western lawyers differ (§ 452, 454).

Women originally without rights.

§ 441. The same causes which led to the break up of the family union would introduce women to the possession of the family property. When partition took place, the fund out of which the women had been maintained would be split into fragments. The natural course would be, either to give an extra share to any member of the family who would make himself responsible for their support, or to allot to them shares out of which they could maintain themselves. This appears to have been what actually took place (g). Similarly, upon the death without issue of a male owner who was the last survivor of the coparcenary, or who had been separated from the other members, or whose property had been self-acquired, it would be more natural that his property should remain in the possession of the women of his family for their support, than that they should be handed over with the property to distant members of the family, who might be utter strangers. In this way their right

Growth of their right to property.

(b) Manu, viii. § 416.

(c) Baudhâyana, ii. 2, § 27; Manu, ix. § 3. See Sancha & Lichita, 3 Dig 484; and texts quoted Mâdhaviya, § 44; Varada, p. 39.

(d) Baudhâyana, i. 5, § 1—3; ii. 2, § 27; Vâsishṭa, xvii.

(e) W. & B. 178; Mâdhaviya, § 44.

(f) W. & B. 178; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 6, § 11; Viramitrodaya, iii. § 16; per Mitter, J., 5 B. L. R. 37; per Westropp, C. J., 2 Bomb. L. R., 418, 428, 438.

(g) See ante, § 401, 412.

Only for main-
tenance.

as heirs, properly so called, and not merely as sharers, would arise. But that right would not extend beyond the reason for it, viz., their claim to a personal maintenance. The old preference for the male line over the female (§ 436, 438) would limit the right, so as to prevent the property passing absolutely out of the family into the hands of male strangers. The woman would not be allowed to become a new stock of descent, so as to transmit the inheritance to her heirs. This is no doubt the foundation of that rule which is assumed in all the works on inheritance, that where a woman inherits to a male, his heirs and not hers take at her death (§ 523).

§ 442. The women who were the actual members of a man's family, and as such entitled to support, would always stand to him in the position of daughter, mother, wife, or sister, taking in under these terms more distant relations of the same class, such as grandmother and the like. The daughter and the mother appear to have been the first to obtain a recognized right to inherit.

Right of daugh-
ter.

Manu allows a daughter to inherit after her father. But it seems very doubtful whether he did not limit this right to the case of the daughter, specially appointed to raise up a son for him. I have already suggested that a daughter so appointed remained in her father's family, so that her son was his son, and not the son of his actual father (*h*). Naturally such a daughter would be specially favoured, as the descent of property to her would not take it out of the family. Now the text of Manu which states her right of inheritance follows after three texts which relate to the appointed daughter solely. It then proceeds, "The son of a man is even as himself, and as the son such is the daughter (thus appointed). How then (if he have no son) can any inherit his property but a daughter who is closely united with his own soul?" (*i*) The words in brackets are the gloss of Kallûka Bhaṭṭa, who evidently understood the text as I do. The same view was taken of it by Daraiçwara, Davaśwamy, and Davarata, as stated by the

(*h*) See *ante*, § 72, *post*, § 477.

(*i*) Manu, ix. § 127—130.

Smṛiti Chandrikâ (*k*). It is also remarkable that in the texts where Manu states the order of succession to a man who has left no issue, he makes no reference to a daughter as an heir (*l*). The texts would harmonize, if we suppose that in the former passage he was speaking only of a daughter who, by virtue of her special appointment, became his son, as she is stated to be by Vâsishṭa (*m*). This also accords with the position given to her by Nârada, who places her after the son, upon the ground that "she continues the lineage. A son and a daughter equally continue the race of their father" (*n*). This could be strictly true only of an appointed daughter; for the son of any other daughter would be of a different family and a different name, like any other *bandhu*. But when the practice of making an appointed daughter became obsolete (§ 74), the daughter not appointed would naturally fall into the same position, or rather would retain the position which usage had made familiar. Her right would then rest on the simple ground of consanguinity. This is the ground on which it is based by Vṛihaspati and the Mitâksharâ: "As a son, so does the daughter of a man proceed from his several limbs. How then should any other person take her father's wealth?" (*o*)

Appointed
daughter.

§ 443. No distinction is to be found in the earlier sages as to the capacity of one daughter to inherit in preference to another. Devala says, "To unmarried daughters a nuptial portion must be given out of the estate of the father; and his own daughter, lawfully begotten, shall take, like a son, the estate of him who leaves no male issue" (*p*). This suggests the idea that the daughter's right of inheritance arose from the obligation to endow her. Hence Kâtyâyana says, "Let the widow succeed to her husband's wealth, and in default of her the daughter inherits, if unmarried or unprovided" (*q*). Parâçara enlarges the rule as follows (*r*):

Grounds of
precedence
between
daughters.

(*k*) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 2, § 16.

(*l*) Manu, ix. § 185, 217.

(*m*) *Ante*, § 72.

(*n*) Nârada, xiii. § 50.

(*o*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 2. § 2.

(*p*) 3 Dig. 491. See too Yâjñavalkya, ii. § 135; Mitâksharâ, ii. 1. § 2.

(*q*) Cited Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 2, § 20; Mitâksharâ, ii. 2, § 2.

(*r*) 3 Dig. 490

Benares.

"The unmarried daughter shall take the inheritance of the deceased, who left no male issue, and on failure of her the married daughter." So far, at all events, there is no idea of religious merit. The object of the dowry is to facilitate marriage, and to benefit the daughter (s). Naturally, the daughter who is already set up in the world has a claim inferior to that of one who has her fortune to seek. And similarly, in a competition between married daughters, the preference was given to the poor daughter over the rich one (t). None of the writers of the Benares school, except the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, absolutely exclude any daughter, or suggest any reason for her inheriting except the simple one of consanguinity (u). The Bengal writers for the first time introduce the idea of religious efficacy. A daughter of course could offer no religious oblations herself, but her right was put upon the ground that she produced sons who could present oblations (x). A reference to Manu will show, as might have been expected, that the daughter's son, whose power of offering funeral cakes was considered to be equal to that of a son's son, was the son of the appointed daughter (y). Jîmûta Vâhana, however, laid down that no daughter could inherit unless she had, or was capable of having male issue, and the natural result was the exclusion of daughters who were widows, or barren, or who appeared to have an incapacity for bringing any but daughters into the world (z). This principle is also adopted by the author of the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, who necessarily excludes barren daughters (a). It will be seen that his authority in this respect has been accepted in Southern India (§ 474). The mode in which these various principles operate will be

Bengal law.

(s) See Vâsishta, cited Dâya Bhâga, xi. 2, § 6. Also Teulon, 12, note 2, where he points out, that as the degradation of woman consisted in her being a mere object of purchase, so the first step towards her elevation was taken, when the dowry made it no longer necessary that she should be sold.

(t) Mitâksharâ, ii. 2, § 4; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 2, § 21; V. May., iv. 8, § 11, 12.

(u) Vivâda Chintâmañi, 291, 292; V. May., iv. 8, § 10; W. & B. 154, 155; Mâdhaviya, § 36; Varadrâjah, 34.

(x) See per Mitter, J., *Gunga Pershad v. Shumbhoonath*, 22 W. R. 393; per Jaganmâtha, 3 Dig. 194.

(y) Manu, ix. § 131—140. See post, § 477.

(z) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 2, § 1—3; 8 D. K. S. i. 3, § 5.

(a) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 2, § 10, 21. See post, § 474.

examined in the next chapter, upon THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION (§ 474).

§ 444. The mother is of course not mentioned as an heir by Baudhâyana, who excludes all women (*b*), nor by Āpastamba, Gautama, or Vâsishṭa; Nârada states her right to a share on partition by the sons after the death of their father, but does not refer to her as an heir (*c*). Her claim, however, and that of the grandmother, are expressly stated by Manu (*d*): "Of a son dying childless (and leaving no widow) the (father and) mother shall take the estate: and the mother also being dead, the paternal (grandfather and) grandmother shall take the heritage (on failure of brothers and nephews)." The gloss of Kallûka as contained in brackets marks the changes in the law since the time of Manu. Vishṇu also inserts the mother in the list of heirs next after the father (*e*), and Yâjñavalkya places both parents after the daughters (*f*). Her claim is also mentioned by Vṛhaspati and Kátyâyana, of whom the former places her after wife and male issue, while the latter brings her in after male issue, father or brother (*g*). Right of mother;

As to the ground of her claim, the mother as well as the grandmother and great-grandmother, are certainly sapinḍas, as sharing with their husbands the cakes which are offered to them by the male issue (*h*). But her claim, and indeed that of the father too, is always placed on the ground of consanguinity, and of the merit she possesses in reference to her son, from having conceived and nurtured him in her womb. And by many commentators she is preferred to the father, upon considerations derived from a comparison of the respective degrees in which mother and father share in the composition of the son (*i*), while the Mitâksharâ prefers its origin.

(*b*) *Ante*, § 440.

(*c*) Nârada, xiii. § 12.

(*d*) Manu, ix. § 217; cf. § 185, where Manu makes the father and then the brothers take.

(*e*) Vishṇu. xvii. § 7.

(*f*) Yâjñavalkya, ii. § 136.

(*g*) 3 Dig. 502, 506.

(*h*) *Ante*, § 426. Subodhini extends the right of female ascendants to the mother and grandmother of the paternal great-grandfather, and says that the same analogy holds good among the *Samânodakas*. Mitâksharâ, ii. 5, § 5. Colebrooke's note, 2 Bomb. L. R. 433.

(*i*) 3 Dig. 504; Mitâksharâ, ii. 3: Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 3, § 3; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 4, § 2; Vivâda Chintâmaṇi, 293.

her on the ground of greater propinquity (*k*). When we come to Jīmûta Vâhana, however, we find the religious doctrine introduced for the first time. He prefers the father to the mother, because the father offers oblations in which the son participates; and he prefers the mother, who offers none, to the brothers, who offer three, “because she confers benefits on him by the birth of other sons who may offer funeral oblations in which he will participate” (*l*). An argument which obviously would never apply, as regards the mother of an only son, or of a son whose brothers had died before him without leaving issue.

Right of
widow;

§ 445. The growth of a widow’s right of succession is much more complicated than that of mother or daughter. Originally of course she shared in the general incapacity for inheritance which affected all women. But her right was recognized later than that of other females who now take after her. Neither Manu, Âpastamba, Vâsishṭa nor Nârada recognize her right as heir; though they do acknowledge that of the daughter and mother (*m*). Vishṇu, however, assigns to her a place after male issue (*n*). Vṛiddha Manu, Vṛihaspati, Sancha and Lichita and Devala all make her heir (*o*). So, of course, does Yâjñavalkya (*p*), who is followed by his commentator Vijñaneśvara.

The following account of the manner in which the rights of a widow arose, is taken almost exclusively from Dr. Mayr’s dissertation upon the subject (*q*).

its origin and
growth.

§ 446. From the very earliest times the widow was entitled to be maintained by her husband’s heirs. When a brother died without issue, or entered a religious order, the other brothers were to divide his wealth, except the wife’s separate property, and to allow a maintenance to his women for life. But even this maintenance depended upon their living a life of chastity. If they behaved otherwise it might be

(*k*) Mitāksharâ, ii. 3, § 3; *ante*, § 436.

(*l*) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 4, § 2; D. K. S. i. 6, § 2.

(*m*) See Manu, ix. § 185, 212, 217, where Kallûka inserts a gloss in favour of the widow, whose rights are not recognized in the original. See the explanation of Mitāksharâ, xi. 1, § 35.

(*n*) Vishṇu, xvii. § 4.

(*o*) 3 Dig. 458, 473, 474, 478; Kâtyayana, Mitāksharâ, ii. 1, § 6.

(*p*) Yâjñavalkya, ii. 135.

(*q*) Mayr, 179, *et seq.* See too *per curiam*, 11 Bomb. H. C. 273.

resumed (*r*). So Nārada says (*s*), "when the husband is deceased, his kin are the guardians of his childless widow; in disposing of her, and in the care of her, as well as in her maintenance, they have full power." Even as against the king, when he took by escheat, the widow did not inherit, but he was bound to give a maintenance to the women of such persons (*t*). These passages of Nārada are of special importance, because, as his work was professedly based upon Manu, they show that nothing in Manu was then understood as countenancing the right of a widow to inherit.

Origin and
growth of
widow's rights.

§ 447. The next step would naturally be that the amount necessary for the maintenance should be set apart for it, and left at her own disposal. In the case of an escheat the text of Kātyāyana cited above seems to indicate that this was done. And the same course was adopted in case of a partition (*u*). Where the property was very small in amount, the whole would often be handed over to the widow. And so Ārīkara and others were of opinion that a widow's right of succession was limited to the case of a small property (*x*). No such explanation can be given to the texts of Yājñavalkya and others, which expressly state a woman's right of succession, since they all put her succession on exactly the same footing as that of sons (*y*). But the view of Ārīkara and those who thought with him, is valuable, from a historical point of view, as showing what the usage was, before the widow's right was firmly established. When it had once become customary to hand over the whole of a small property to a widow, the decision whether a property was sufficiently small would become difficult and invidious. The more wealthy the husband had been, the larger would be the scale of maintenance suitable to his widow, especially when

(*r*) Nārada, xiii. § 25, 26. Vijñāneśvara explains these texts as applying to the case of a reunited parcener, Mitāksharā, ii. 1, § 20; but, as Mayr observes, his case had been provided for by the preceding text, § 24.

(*s*) Nārada, xiii. § 23. See too Sancha, 3 Dig. 482.

(*t*) Nārada, xiii. § 52. Kātyāyana, cited Mitāksharā, ii. 1, § 27. Vijñāneśvara remarks upon these passages that the words used for women, "stri" and "yoshit," apply to concubines, which, as Mayr remarks (184), is opposed to innumerable passages.

(*u*) Ante, § 401.

(*x*) Mitāksharā, ii. 1, § 31. So among the Sutlej chiefs, Panjāb Customs, 25.

(*y*) Mitāksharā, ii. 1, § 36; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 6.

it came to the expected that she should perform her husband's *Grâddha* and discharge the charities to which he had been accustomed (z). Where the relations were themselves adequately provided for, there would often be a strong feeling in favour of leaving the whole property to the widow for her life, and this feeling would naturally exist among all relations of the husband other than the next in succession. They might benefit by the property in the hands of a widow, while they would not do so to the same extent if it fell into the hands of the next male heir.

Influence of
niyoga.

§ 448. The practice of the *niyoga* would also help in the same direction. A passage of Gautama (a) is by some translated so as to indicate that a widow was only entitled to succeed if she raised up issue for her husband, in which case her right would be not personal but as guardian for her son. The author of the *Mitâksharâ* explains the passage, not as making the raising up of issue a condition precedent to inheritance, but as offering her an alternative. In either view it is clear that she had the alternative. The male relations would have a strong interest in inducing the widow to refrain from exercising her right, and she would have a specially strong interest in availing herself of it, if she at once became the manager of the property. An obvious compromise would be to allow her to succeed at once to a life estate in the property, provided she waived the privilege of producing a new and absolute owner. Hence the condition of chastity which the Brâhman lawyers engrafted upon her right of succession, a condition which is wholly unsupported by the early texts of the Vedas (b).

Widow only
takes separate
estate.

§ 449. It is impossible now to ascertain when the widow's right of inheritance was first established. Yâjñavalkya and others already referred to, lay it down absolutely; but the author of the *Mitâksharâ* (c) still thought it necessary to enter into an elaborate discussion of the whole subject, as if it were even in his time an open question. The conclusion he arrives at is, that the widow is entitled to inherit to

(z) Vrihaspati, 3 Dig. 458.

(a) Gautama, xxviii. § 18, 19. See *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 1, § 8.

(b) Mayr, 181; *ante*, § 86.

(c) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 1.

her husband, if he died separated and not reunited, and leaving no male issue. And this rule is now adopted universally, except where the authority of Jímûta Vâhana prevails (*d*). The rule seems necessarily to follow from the view taken by the Mitâksharâ of the rights of undivided members. While the husband lived, his wife had only a right to be maintained by him in a suitable manner; after his death, his rights all lapse to his surviving coparceners, and she can have no higher right against them than she had against her husband. The question of heirship for the first time arises in case of a divided member, as it is only in regard to divided property that there can be an heir, properly so called. In other words, the widow can take by succession as heir, but cannot take by survivorship as coparcener (*e*).

Widow is heir
but not copar-
cener,

§ 450. Of course the very foundation of this reasoning fails as regards Jímûta Vâhana, for he denies the premise, viz., that all the undivided members of the family hold each an unascertained interest in every part of the whole, and that at the death of each that interest passes to the survivors. On the contrary he considers that each has a separate right to an unascertained portion of the aggregate, that is, that each holds as a tenant in common, and not as a joint tenant. That being so, of course there is no reason to restrain the express words of texts which state the right of a widow to succeed to her husband, by limiting them to the case of a divided member. It is therefore equally settled in Bengal, that a widow succeeds to her husband's share when he is undivided, just as she would to the entire

except in
Bengal.

(*d*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 1, § 19, 30; ii. 9, § 4; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 1, § 24, 25, 53, 54; xii. § 9; Varadrâja, 34; Mâdhaviya, § 34, 35, says nothing as to division; *Katama Nachiar v. Shivagunga*, 9 M. I. A. 539. As to Benares: 2 W. MacN. 21; *Hiranath Koer v. Baboo Ram Narayan*, 9 B. L. R. 274; *Chowdry Chintamun v. Mt. Nowlukho Konwari*, 2 I. A. 263; Mithilâ, Vivâda Chintâmañi, 290; *Pudmavati v. Baboo Doolar*, 4 M. I. A. 259, 264; *Mt. Anundee Koonwur v. Khedoo Lall*, 14 M. I. A. 416. Bombay: V. May., iv. 8 § 6; *Mt. Goolab v. Mt. Phool*, 1 Bor. 154; *Govindas Dhoolubdas v. Muha Lukshmee*, ib. 241; *Mankoonwar v. Bhugoo*, 2 Bor. 139; *Gun Joshee v. Sugoona*, 2 Bor. 401; W. & B. 77, 115, 128. In some cases in the Punjâb and among the Jains a widow appears to succeed to her husband's estate, even though undivided. But the general practice seems to follow the Mitâksharâ; Punjâb Customs, 56; 6 N. W. P., H. C. 406.

(*e*) This exclusion of the widow does not take place where the property is that of an ordinary mercantile partnership, and not that of an undivided Hindu family; *Rampershad v. Sheochurn*, 10 M. I. A. 490.

property of one who held as separated (*f*). But this does not apply in case of the widow of a son who dies before his father, undivided, and leaving no separate property (*g*); because in Bengal the son is not a co-sharer with his father, and therefore has no interest which can pass to his widow.

She takes self-acquired property.

Partition not completed.

Reasons for widow's succession.

§ 451. Even under the Mitāksharâ, if a man dies undivided, but leaving property, part of which is his self-acquisition, his widow will succeed to that part, though the rest of his property passes by survivorship to his coparceners. This had been already laid down by the pandits in Bombay, and in a case under the Mithilâ law, and was finally settled by the Judicial Committee in the Shivagunga case (*h*). And so where the *status* of division has been established by agreement, but no actual apportionment has taken place, or where part has been apportioned, and not the remainder, in either case the widow inherits as the heir of a divided member, instead of being only entitled to maintenance (*i*).

§ 452. When the right of a widow was once established, the Hindu lawyers were at no loss for reasons to show that it had always existed. According to Manu, upon conception by a wife the husband himself was born again in her, and became one person with her (*k*). And so Vṛihaspati says, "Of him whose wife is not deceased, half the body survives. How should another take the property while half the body of the owner lives? (*l*)."¹ It is obvious that this metaphor has the fault of many other metaphors. It proves too much. If the husband still survives, the sons cannot take. If the widow is looked upon as the continuation of her husband's existence, she ought to take even before male

(*f*) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 25, 26, 27; D. K. S. ii. 2, § 41; F. MacN. 5. See cases 1 M. Dig. 316; 3 Dig. 476, 485; *per West, J.*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 508.

(*g*) F. MacN. 1.

(*h*) W. & B. 81, 127; 2 W. MacN. 92; 9 M. I. A. 539; *Periasawmy v. Periasawmy*, 5 I. A. 61, followed; 5 I. A. 160.

(*i*) *Suraneny v. Suraneny*, 13 M. I. A. 113; *Gajapathi v. Gajapathi*, ib. 497; *ante*, § 418; *Narain Iyer v. Lakshmi Ammal*, 3 Mad. H. C. 239; *Patni Mal v. Ray Manohur*, 5 S. D. 349 (410); *Rewun Pershad v. Mt. Radha Beebee*, 4 M. I. A. 137, 148, 152; *Timmi Reddy v. Atchama*, 2 Mad. H. C. 325.

(*k*) Manu, ix. § 8, 45.

(*l*) 3 Dig. 458. See *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, xi. 1, § 6; 9 M. I. A. 610; 1 Mad. L. R. 228.

issue (*m*). But the widow had also another ground of merit, as offering funeral oblations to her husband. In respect of these Jímûta Vâhana points out that she was inferior to her sons, as she only performed acts spiritually beneficial to him from the date of her widowhood, while they did so from the date of their birth (*n*). In any point of view it will be seen that the merits of the widow were purely personal, as between herself and her husband. As a mother she has claims on her descendants; but as a widow her claim for anything beyond maintenance is only against her husband. Therefore she can only succeed to his property or rights, that is, to the property which was actually vested in him, either in title or in possession, at the time of his death (*o*). She must take at once at his death, or not at all. No fresh right can accrue to her as widow in consequence of the subsequent death of some one to whom he would have been heir if he had lived. Hence no claim as heir can be set up on behalf of the widow of a son (*p*), or of a grandson (*q*), or of a daughter's son (*r*), or of a father (*s*), or of a brother (*t*), or of an uncle (*x*), or of a cousin (*y*). This is undoubtedly the law of Bengal, Benares and Madras. It is now, however, settled that the law in Bombay is different. The subject is discussed by Messrs. West and Bühler, p. 178, and their views have been fully adopted by the High Court of Bombay in the case of *Lallubhai v. Makkuverbai* (*z*). The process of

Only takes husband's property.

Widow is only heir to husband,

except in Bombay.

(*m*) See *ante*, § 218, where it is suggested that at one time the mother's life estate may have been interposed before full enjoyment by the sons.

(*n*) 3 Dig. 456, 458; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 1, § 43.

(*o*) If his title was vested, though his enjoyment postponed, she will equally take. *Rewun Pershad v. Mt. Radha Beebee*, 4 M. I. A. 137, 176; *Hurrosoondery v. Rajessuree*, 2 W. R. 321.

(*p*) 2 W. MacN. 43, 75, 104; 2 Stra. H. L. 233, 234; *Mt. Ayabuttee v. Rajkissen*, 3 S. D. 28 (38); *Rai Sham Bullubh v. Prankishen*, ib. 33 (44); *Mt. Himulta v. Mt. Pudo Monee*, 4 S. D. 19 (25); *Monee Mohun v. Dhun Monee*, S. D. of 1853, 910; *Raj Kishore v. Hurrosoondery*, S. D. of 1858, 825; *Bai Amrit v. Bai Manik*, 12 Bomb 79; Punjab Custom, 64.

(*q*) *Ambawow v. Rutton Kristna*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 132.

(*r*) 2 W. MacN. 47.

(*s*) *Venkata Soobammal v. Venkummam*, 1 Mad. Dec. 210; *Vadrevu v. Wuppalluri*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 125; *Ram Koonwar v. Ummur*, 1 Bor. 415; *Bhyrobee Dossee v. Nubbkissen*, 6 S. D. 53 (61).

(*t*) 2 W. MacN. 78; 2 Stra. H. L. 231; *Yetiraj v. Tayammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1854, 184; *Peddammattu v. Appa Rau*, 2 Mad. H. C. 117; *Mt. Jymunee v. Ramjoy*, 3 S. D. 289 (385).

(*x*) *Upendra Mohun v. Thanda Dasi*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 349.

(*y*) *Soorendronath v. Mt. Heeramonee*, 12 M. I. A. 81.

(*z*) 2 Bomb. L. R. 388, following and affirming *Lakshmibai v. Jayram*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 152, now under appeal to P. C.

Western India. reasoning of the Western lawyers seems to be as follows. They accept the general principle that succession goes in the order of *sapinḍaship*, taking the text of Manu (ix. § 187) with the gloss of Kallûka, so that it runs :—"To the nearest *sapinḍa*, male or female, after him in the third degree, the inheritance next belongs." Then they interpret *sapinḍaship* as meaning connection by blood, in the manner explained by Vijñaneśvara (§ 434), which makes even the wives of brothers be *sapinḍa* to each other, because they produce one body with those who have sprung from one body. On the same principle they make the daughter-in-law a *sapinḍa* (a). Hence "They prefer the sister-in-law to the sister's son, and to a male cousin, and more distant male *sagotra-sapinḍas*, the paternal uncle's widow to the sister, the maternal uncle, and the paternal grandfather's brother, and they allow a daughter-in-law, and a distant *gotraja-sapinḍa*'s widow to inherit." The learned editors remark, "It is however sometimes impossible to bring the authorities which they quote into harmony with their answers (b)." It may be added, that it is equally difficult to bring their answers into harmony with each other. I have given up in despair the attempt to reconcile the futwahs and rulings from Bombay, already cited in this paragraph, with those which will be found below (c). The result of this doctrine is, "that a widow in a nearer collateral line has precedence over a male in a remoter line (d)." This rule of succession is stated by the Bombay High Court to be deduced, or rather to be deducible, from the *Mitâksharâ*, though they admit that the foundation afforded for it by that work is slender, inasmuch as "no widow of a collateral is expressly provided for; the only wife of an ascendant expressly admitted, is one for whom there is an express text." Under the *Mayûkha*, according to Mr. Justice West, such a right "may be called almost

(a) W. & B. 196.

(b) W. & B. 181, 195—199.

(c) *Muhalukmee v. Kripashookul*, 2 Bor. 510; *Mt. Jethee v. Mt. Sheo*, ib. 588; *Baee Umrul v. Baee Koosul*, Morris, 5.

(d) 2 Bomb. L. R. at p. 445.

shadowy (e).” Yet, curiously enough, in Southern India such a rule admittedly does not exist, while in Western India its acceptance in practice is beyond doubt. It certainly seems to me that this is one of those cases in which usages, which sprung up without any reference to the Sanskrit law books, are now supported by torturing those books so as to draw from them conclusions of which their authors had no idea. In the Punjâb, on the other hand, Punjâb. special family customs exist under which widows are not allowed even to succeed to their husband’s estate, or only to a small portion of it (f).

§ 453. The relations whom we have been considering Sister. have all had express texts asserting their title as heirs. The widow and mother are also *gotraja sapinḍas*, both in the meaning of the Mitâksharâ, as being connected with the deceased owner by affinity, and in the meaning of the Dâya Bhâga, as being connected with him by funeral oblations. (§ 426). The daughter is a *sapinḍa*, though not a *gotraja sapinḍa*, according to the view of Vijñaneśvara, and although she neither presents nor participates in oblations, she is fitted into the scheme of Jîmûta Vâhana by her capacity for producing a presenter of offerings. The sister stands in a different position from all these. She has no religious efficacy whatever, as she is in no way connected with the funeral offerings to her brother. She is a *sapinḍa*, as regards affinity, but she is not a *gotraja sapinḍa*, according to the Benares writers, as she passes into a strange *gotra* immediately upon her marriage. As regards the authority of texts, the matter stands in this way. Text. The sister is stated to take a share, either upon an original partition, or after a reunion (g), but this is a different thing from taking as heiress. A passage from Sancha and Lichita (h), “The daughter shall take the female property, and she alone is heir to the wealth of her mother’s son who leaves no male issue,” would certainly seem to be a direct affirmation of the

(e) 2 Bomb. L. R. at p. 447.

(f) Punjâb Customs, 25, 48.

(g) Manu. ix. § 118, 212; Vrihaspati, 3 Dig. 476; ante, § 401; post, § 502.

(h) 3 Dig. 187.

Text relating to
sister.

right of a sister to succeed to her brother. Jagannâtha explains the latter part of the text as referring to an appointed daughter. The text itself is not cited in any commentary that I am aware of as an authority for her right as an heir, even by the Mayûkha, which admits that right. Possibly it may refer to *strîdhanum* which had passed from the mother to the son, which, as will be seen hereafter, is sometimes the case (§ 576). Nanda Paṇḍita, and Balam-bhaṭṭa, interpret the text of the Mitâksharâ which gives the inheritance to *brethren*, as including sisters, so that the brothers take first, and then the sisters (*i*). But this order of succession is opposed to the whole spirit of the Benares law. It is not accepted even by the Mayûkha, which makes the sister come in after the grandmother, under a different text (*j*), and the interpretation has been rejected by the Judicial Committee (*k*). It may be taken therefore, and it appears always to be assumed, that there is no text which in express terms asserts the right of a sister to succeed to her brother. In Bombay, however, her right is now beyond dispute. In Bengal and Benares it seems clear that she has no right at all. In Madras her right has been recently affirmed, by a decision which is certainly opposed to the entire current of authority in Southern India. This will render it necessary to examine the law upon the subject at greater length than the importance of the point would seem to require.

Her right
admitted in
Bombay.

§ 454. The mode in which the sister's title is made out in Western India, appears to be as follows. She is considered a *sapinda*, as already stated, by virtue of her affinity to her brother (§ 452). She is also considered a *gotraja sapinda*, on the ground that this term is satisfied by her having been born in her brother's family, and that she does not lose her position as a *gotraja* by being born again in her husband's *gotra*, upon her marriage. That being so, her place among the *gotrajas* is determined by nearness of kin, and is settled

(i) Mitâksharâ, ii. 4, § 1, note.

(j) V. May., iv, 8, § 16, 19; *post*, § 501.

(k) *Thakoorain Sahiba v. Mohun Lall*, 11 M. I. A. 386, 402.

to be between the grandmother and the grandfather (*l*). It is probable that the whole of this reasoning is a mere contrivance to bring a succession, which was established by immemorial usage, into apparent conformity with Sanskrit law. The usage itself is established beyond doubt, and has received the sanction of the Privy Council. And half-sisters succeed as well as sisters of the whole blood, though no doubt they would come in after whole sisters (*m*).

§ 455. In Bengal it is equally clear, both on principle and authority, that the sister is not an heir. She possesses no spiritual efficacy, and comes under the general text of Baudhâyana which excludes all females, without being rescued from it by any special text in her favour (*n*). Jagannâtha says of her, "It is nowhere seen that sisters inherit the property of their brothers (*o*)."

And her exclusion is treated as quite undisputed by both the MacNaghtens and Sir Thomas Strange (*p*). There is also a uniform current of decisions to the same effect, extending from 1816 to 1870 (*q*). In one case a *futwah* was given by the Pandits declaring that a sister, though not herself an heir, was entitled to enter upon and hold the estate in trust for a son whom she might afterwards produce, where such a son would be the next heir (*r*). But this decision has been expressly declared not to be law, on the well-established principle that a Hindu estate can never be in abeyance, but must always vest at once in the person who is, at the time of descent cast, the next heir (*s*).

Not an heir in Bengal.

§ 455A. As regards the provinces which follow the Mitâksharâ, both principle and authority seem also to exclude the

Nor under Benares law.

(*l*) V. May., iv. 8, § 18—20; W. & B. 181; *per West*, J., 2 Bomb. L. R., p. 445. Westropp, C. J., prefers resting her right upon her affinity as *sapinda*, even though not a *gotraja*, and upon the express authority of Vṛihaspati and Nīlakantha. 2 Bomb. L. R. 421.

(*m*) W. & B. 169, 181, 196, 198, 242; *Vinayek v. Luvumabae*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 118; affirmed 9 M. I. A. 516; 1 W. & B. 154; *Sakparam v. Sitabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R., 353; *Bhondu Gurow v. Gangabai*, ib. 369.

(*n*) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 6, § 11.

(*o*) 3 Dig. 517.

(*p*) F. MacN. 4, 7; 1 W. MacN. 35, note; 1 Stra. H. L. 146.

(*q*) 2 W. MacN. 68, 80, 81, 85, 97, 98; *Koonwaree Kirpa v. Damoodhur*, 7 S. D. 192 (226); *Bamasoonderee v. Raj Kristo*, Sev. 742; *Kalee Pershad v. Bhoirabee*, 2 W. R. 180; *Anund Chunder v. Teetoram*, 5 W. R. 215; *Strimuttee Rukkini v. Kadarnath*, 5 B. L. R. Appx. 87.

(*r*) *Karuna Mai v. Jai Chandra*, 5 S. D. 46 (50).

(*s*) *Kesab Chunder v. Bishnopersaud*, S. D. of 1860, ii. 340; *ante*, § 422.

Sister not
recognized by
Benares
authorities.

sister. She is not named in the line of heirs by the Mitāksharâ or the Vîramitrodaya (t), nor by the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, the Mādhaṁyā or the Varadrâjah, none of whom even refer to her, except as being entitled to a share upon partition or after reunion. She cannot come in as a *gotraja sapinda* within the meaning of Vijñaneśvara, because the Hindu law never contemplates a female as remaining unmarried after the period of puberty, and as soon as she does marry, she passes into a different *gotra* (u). Nor is there any text in her favour, which is as much required by the Benares school as by that of Bengal (§ 440). I have already noticed the construction of the text of the Mitāksharâ, which would bring in the sister as included in the term brethren. This has not been approved of by the writers of any school (§ 453). Nanda Paṇḍita also proposes to bring in the sister on another principle as being the daughter of the father (v). The reasoning would be, A man's own daughter succeeds, as bringing forth the daughter's son. It is now settled that the sister's son—that is, the son of the father's daughter—also succeeds (§ 490). Therefore the father's daughter herself should succeed as bringing him forth. The answer would be, that a man's own daughter succeeds, both because she is his own offspring, and because she produces a son who is of such importance to him, that he is the next male who takes after his own issue. Neither ground would apply to a sister. Not the first of course; nor the second, because, although the sister's son is an heir, he only comes in under the Mitāksharâ as a *bandhu* after the last of the *samânodakas*. Further, the fact that the sister's son is an heir does not involve any assumption that his mother must have been an heir also. He takes by his own independent merit, not through her (w). Accordingly we find that the son of an uncle's daughter is an heir to the

(t) Mitāksharâ ii. 5, § 5, note.

(u) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 6; W. & B. 180. See too Dāya Bhāga, xi. 6, § 10, where Jīmūta Vāhana says that Yājñavalkya uses the term *Gotraja* to exclude females related as *sapindas*, and Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi., 2 Bomb. L. R. 438.

(v) Mitāksharâ, ii. 5, § 5, note.

(w) See *per Holloway*, J., 6 Mad. H. C. 288.

nephew, though the uncle's daughter is not an heir (x) ; the son of a brother's daughter is, but the brother's daughter is not an heir (y) ; the son of a nephew's daughter is, but the nephew's daughter is not an heir (z).

§ 456. The weight of authority seems also to be against the sister's claim. The opinions of both the MacNaghtens, of Mr. Colebrooke, Mr. Sutherland, and Sir Thomas Strange, were opposed to her claim; and a futwah by a Madras Pandit to the same effect is cited by the latter author (a). In 1858 a case came before the Madras Sudr Court, in which a sister claimed as heir to her brother, relying on the texts of Manu and the authority of Nanda Pandita and Balambhatta. The Court said, "The Judges of the Sudder Udalut, while admitting that the arguments of the special appellant have much force, and that the texts relative to division after reunion show that under such circumstances a sister has a right of inheritance, from which a presumption might perhaps be drawn that the spirit of the law may possibly not have originally contemplated the exclusion which now prevails, are of opinion that the law is not only too ill defined to admit of such construction, in opposition to existing usage, but must even, if speaking more clearly, be regarded as obsolete and virtually changed, and modified by practice prevailing beyond memory, and acquiesced in by all parties concerned (b)."

The same claim was set up, with the same arguments and the same result, before the High Court of Bengal in 1863, in a case governed by Mitâksharâ law. The Court, after referring to Manu, ix., § 187, 217, Mitâksharâ, ii., 4 and 5, 1 Stra. H. L. 146 ; 1 W. MacN. 35, and a Bengal case, proceed to say, "On the whole, then, we are clearly of opinion that the Vayavastha of the Pandit cannot be set up successfully against the text of the Mitâksharâ, or the general principles of Hindu law, which exclude sisters,

Adverse
decisions.

(x) *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lal*, 5 B. L. R. 15 ; *Gosaien Chund v. Mt. Kishenmunnee*, 6 S. D. 77 (90).

(y) *Gobind Proshad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. L. R. 35 ; *Mt. Jogmurut v. Seetul Pershad*, Sev. 433.

(z) *Kashee Mohun v. Rajgobind*, 24 W. R. 229 ; *Radha Pearee v. Doorga Monee*, 5 W. R. 131.

(a) 1 Stra. H. L. 146 ; 2 Stra. H. L. 243—246 ; F. MacN. 4, 7 ; 1 W. MacN. 35, n. See *per Holloway, J.*, 6 Mad. H. C. 288.

(b) *Chinnasamien v. Koottoor Chinna Naranien*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 175.

or against the marked omission from our precedents of any decision in favour of such a claim, for more than sixty years (c)."

Sister's right

In the Punjâb, among the Sikh Jâts, the sister is also excluded by long-established and recorded usage, which was affirmed by express decision in 1870 (d).

The title of a sister was raised for the first time on appeal to the Privy Council in a case from the N. W. Provinces in 1871, but the Judicial Committee refused to enter upon the question (e); it was also referred to, but without any expression of opinion, by the Committee in 1876 (f).

recently admitted in Madras.

§ 457. On the other hand, a sister was for the first time decided to be an heir to her brother in a very recent case in the Madras High Court (g). Property had devolved on a son, upon whose death it was taken by his mother. She alienated portions of it to strangers, and then died. The plaintiff, who was one of three sisters, sued to set aside the alienations. These were admittedly invalid beyond the life of the mother. The only question therefore was, whether the sister had any title which would support her suit. The Court held that she had. They first declared that she was not a *sapinda*, setting aside the construction put upon the word "brethren" by Balambhatṭa. They then proceeded to say, "Whether the sister is entitled to succeed as a relative of deceased more remote than a *sapinda* is another question. Since the decision of the Judicial Committee in *Gridhari Lall v. The Government of Bengal* (h), the High Court of Madras, following that decision, and the decision of the High Court of Bengal in *Amrita Kumari Devi v. Lakinarayen Chakkerbutti* (i), of which the Judicial Committee approved, have held (k) that a sister's son is entitled to succeed as a *bandhu*, and that the text and commentary in chap. ii., sect. 6, of the *Mitāksharâ* do

(c) *Mt. Guman Kumari v. Srikant Neogi*, Sev. 460.

(d) *Punjâb Custom*, 70.

(e) *Koor Goolab Singh v. Rao Kurun Singh*, 14 M. I. A. 176.

(f) *Vellanki v. Venkata Rama*, 4 I. A. 1, 8.

(g) *Kutti Ammal v. Radakristna Aiyar*, 8 Mad. H. C. 88.

(h) 12 M. I. A. 448.

(i) 2 B. L. R., F. B. 28.

(k) *Chelikani Tirupati v. Rajah Suraneni*, 6 Mad. H. C. 278.

not restrict the limit of *Bandhus* to the cognate kindred there mentioned, but are to be read as merely offering illustrations of the degree of *Bandhus* in their order of succession. In sect. 3 of chap. ii. of the *Mitāksharâ*, § 4, it is said, "Nor is the claim in virtue of propinquity restricted to kinsmen allied by funeral oblations, but on the contrary, it appears from this very text (l) that the rule of propinquity is effectual without any exception in the case of (*samānodakas*) kindred connected by oblations of water, as well as other relations, where they appear to have a claim on the succession." And it is afterwards said in sect. 7, "If there be no relatives of the deceased, the preceptor, &c., according to the text of *Āpastamba*, 'If there be no male issue, the nearest kinsman inherits, or in default of kindred, the preceptor.' " It follows from the above, not only that, in regard to cognates, is there no intention expressed in the law or to be inferred from it, of limiting the right of inheritance to certain specified relationships of that nature, but that, in regard to other relationships also, there is free admission in the order of succession, prescribed by law for the several classes; and that all relatives, however remote, must be exhausted, before the estate can fall to persons who have no connection with the family. In this view plaintiff must be regarded as a relative entitled to succeed on an equal footing with her sisters, who are relatives of the same degree."

Madras High
Court decision

§ 458. This decision will, of course, settle the law in Madras unless reversed. But as it will not be a binding authority upon *Mitāksharâ* law in other parts of India, it may be as well to examine its reasoning more closely. The three cases quoted have, of course, no application. They merely decide that male relations, who come within the definition of a *bandhu* in the *Mitāksharâ* (m), are not excluded from the mere fact that they are not specifically enumerated in the next section. But if that definition means, as those cases held that it did mean, a person connected by funeral oblations with the deceased, then a sister does not

discussed.

(l) *Manu*, ix. § 187.

(m) *Mitāksharâ*, ii. 5, § 3.

Madras decision
discussed.

come within the definition, not being “connected by funeral oblations.” It is also to be remarked that the enumeration in *Mitāksharā*, ii. 6, though not exhaustive as to the individuals, includes none but males, and is therefore strong evidence that none but males were supposed capable of satisfying the definition. And the cases cited show that none but males could satisfy the definition, as there understood. The judgment, however, goes on to cite two texts as showing (apparently) that other relatives who are neither *gentiles* nor *bandhus* may inherit by virtue of mere propinquity. In the first passage (*n*), *Vijñaneśvara* is weighing the comparative merits of the father and the mother, both of whom are gotraja *sapiṇḍas*. He decides in favour of the latter on the ground of propinquity, and proceeds, in the text cited by the High Court, to remark that this principle of propinquity applies not only to *sapiṇḍas*, but to *samānodakas*, “as well as other relatives, when they appear to have a claim to the succession.” That is to say, given a rivalry between two persons, both entitled to inherit, the one who is nearest in blood shall take. The text does not attempt to lay down who have a claim to succession. On the contrary, it seems to assume that there may be relatives who would not “appear to have a claim to the succession.” It does not define the class of heirs—that, as will be shown immediately, had been done already—but lays down a rule by which one member of the class is to be preferred to another. The word which is translated by Mr. Colebrooke “as well as other relatives,” is simply *ādi* appended to *samānodakas*, and means the like, or *et cetera* (*o*). It would be contrary to the ordinary principles of construction to interpret such a word, as, introducing a completely different class. The next text proves exactly the opposite of what it is cited for by the High Court. To understand it we must go back a little. The first seven sections of the *Mitāksharā*, cap. ii., are merely a commentary on the text of *Yājñavalkya* (*p*), “The wife, and the daughters also, both parents, brothers likewise and

(*n*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 3, § 3, 4.

(*o*) See as to the use of this *ādi*, Burnell's Preface to *Varadrajā*.

(*p*) *Yājñavalkya*, ii. § 135; cited *Mitāksharā*, ii. 1, § 2.

their sons, gentiles, *cognates* (q), a pupil and a fellow student; on failure of the first among these, the next in order is indeed heir to the estate of one who departed for heaven, leaving no male issue. This rule extends to all (persons and) classes.” This text recognizes no relatives coming after nephews who are not either gentiles (*gotraja*) or *bandhus*. Sections 1—4 treat of relations up to and including nephews. Section 5, § 1 defines *gotraja*, and § 3 defines *bandhus*. The remainder of section 5 illustrates the succession of gentiles or *gotrajas*. Section 6 illustrates the succession of *bandhus*. It is now settled that these illustrations are not exhaustive, but that anyone who comes within the definition may inherit (§ 436). Then comes section 7, which treats of the succession of those who are not relatives at all. It commences, “If there be no relations of the deceased, the preceptor, or on failure of him the pupil, inherits, by the text of *Āpastamba*. ‘If there be no male issue, the nearest kinsman inherits, or in default of kindred the preceptor, or, failing him, the disciple.’” The Court infers from this “that in regard to other relationships also” (meaning, apparently, relationships which do not come under the head of cognates) “there is free admittance to the inheritance in the order of succession prescribed by law for the several classes, and that all relatives, however remote, must be exhausted before the estate can fall to persons who have no connection with the family.” That is to say, the Court seems to think that the words, “If there be no relations of the deceased,” let in a new class of relations, who are neither gentiles nor cognates, but who are connected with the deceased by propinquity. It would be rather remarkable if a section which is devoted to strangers should have this effect, and should, by a side wind as it were, bring in an entirely new set of heirs, who are not defined, and of whose very existence there is no previous hint. But the fact is that the word which Mr. Colebrooke has translated “relations” is *bandhu* (r). This makes everything consistent. Section 5 treats of *gotrajas*. Section 6 treats of *bandhus*. Section 7 of those who come in when there are no *bandhu*.

Madras decision discussed.

(q) *Bandhu*, see Goldstücker 26.

(r) Goldstücker 26.

There is no third class of persons who, being neither *gotraja* nor *bandhu*, are still relations. In the passage of Āpastamba, the word translated kinsman and kindred is *sapiṇḍa* (s). Āpastamba does not appear to recognize *bandhus* at all.

Heirship of
sister con-
sidered.

§ 459. It certainly seems to me, with the greatest possible respect for the learned Judges of the Madras High Court, that their decision cannot be supported upon the grounds upon which they have put it. Whenever the question arises again, it will probably be found that the claim of the sister can only be made out, either upon the principle on which she is let in by Nīlakaṇṭha and his followers, that is as a *sapiṇḍa*, or by excluding from the definition of *bandhu* all reference to funeral oblations, and taking it simply as denoting persons connected by affinity (§ 434). The former position has been denied to her by the Judicial Committee, and by the Madras High Court (t). Whatever may have been the original meaning of the text of Manu (ix. § 187), “To the nearest *sapiṇḍa* the inheritance belongs,” the text must now be read with that of Yājñavalkya, and the commentary of the Mitāksharā, which show that *sapiṇḍa*, as opposed to *bandhu*, means one of the same family, and not a person removed from it by marriage (§ 455A). On the other hand, if the idea of funeral offerings is excluded from the definition of a *bandhu*, a sister would certainly come within it. But then we should have to consider the whole framework of the Mitāksharā, as understood and acted upon in Southern India (u) which recognizes no females who are not denoted by special texts. To admit a sister as an heir at this time of day appears to be the very course, to which their Lordships of the Judicial Committee say they have “an insuperable objection,” viz., “by a decision founded on a new construction of the words of the Mitāksharā, to run counter to that which appears to them to be the current of modern authority” (x).

(s) *Āpastamba*, ii. 14 § 2.

(t) 11 M. I. A. 402; 8 Mad. H. C. 92.

(u) These qualifying words are added with reference to the view taken of the literal language of the Mitāksharā by the High Court of Bombay in *Lallubhai v. Mankuwarbhai*, ante, § 452. The Judges seem to admit that their interpretation of the Mitāksharā is either not accepted in Madras, or is over-ruled by the countervailing authority of the Smṛiti Chandrikā. 2 Bomb. L. R., at pp. 318, 338.

(x) 11 M. I. A. 403; 14 M. I. A. 196; 6 I. A. 32.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INHERITANCE.

Order of Succession.

§ 460. **ISSUE.**—If a man has become divided from his Issue sons, and subsequently has one or more sons born, he or they take his property exclusively (§ 396). If he is undivided from them, his property passes to the whole of his male issue, which term includes his legitimate sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons (*a*). All of these take at once as a single heir, either directly or by way of representation. Suppose, for instance, a man has had three sons, and dies leaving his eldest son A., and B. the son of A.; two grandsons, C.¹ and C.², by his second son, and three great-grandsons, D.¹, D.², and D.³, by his third son; A. takes for himself and B., C.¹ and C.² take for themselves, and D.¹, D.², and D.³ take for themselves, and these three lines all take take simultaneously. at once, and not in succession to each other. The mode in which they take *inter se*, and the nature of the interests which they take, have been discussed already (*b*). This seems to be an exception to the general rule, that among heirs of different degrees, the nearer always excludes the more remote (*c*). It really is no exception. It is merely an illustration of the rule that property, which is held as separate in one generation, always becomes joint in the next generation (§ 241). If it is held by a father who is himself the head of a coparcenary, it passes at his death to the whole coparcenary, and not to any single member of it, all of them having under the Mitâksharâ equal rights by birth. The Dâya Bhâga puts forward the same view from its religious

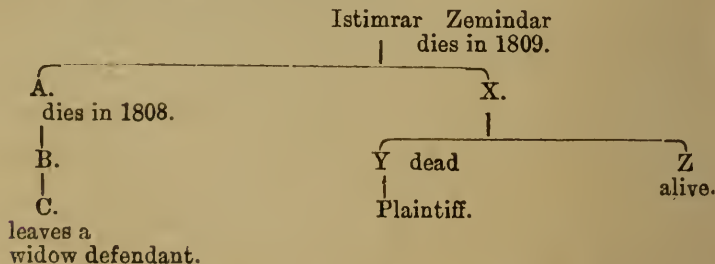
(*a*) Bâudhâyana, i. 5, § 1; Manu, ix, § 137, 135; Mitâksharâ, i. 1, § 3, ii, 8, § 1; Dâya Bhâga, iii. 1, § 18, xi. 1, § 31—34; V. May., iv. 4, § 20—22; Vivâda Chintâmani, 295; *per curiam*, 2 M. I. A. 156; 13 M. I. A. 378.

(*b*) See *ante*, § 387.

(*c*) *Khettur Gopal v. Poorno Chunder*, 15 W. R. 482.

Right of issue. aspect. According to it, the son, grandson, and great-grandson, all present religious offerings to the deceased, and all with equal efficacy. There is therefore no reason why one should be preferred to the other. But as the grandson presents no offerings while his own father is alive, B. does not take directly, but C. and D. do (*d*).

Primogeniture. § 461. Property which is in its nature impartible, as a Rāj or ancient Zemindary, can of course only descend to one of the issue; which that one is to be will depend upon the custom of the family (§ 50). In general such estates descend by the law of primogeniture. In that case the eldest son is the son who was born first, not the first-born son of a senior wife (*e*). So long as the line of the eldest son continued in possession, the estate would pass in that line (*f*). That is to say, on the death of an eldest son, leaving sons, it would pass to his eldest son and not to his brother. But there is a singular want of authority as to the rule to be adopted where an eldest son, who has never taken the estate, has died, leaving younger brothers, and also sons. The point has been twice argued very lately before the Privy Council, but in neither case was it necessary to decide the question. The only cases that I am aware of in which the point was actually decided, were in Madras. Both cases arose in the same family, as will appear from the following pedigree. It only shows so much of the relationship as will render the litigation intelligible.



Here it will be seen that at the death of the Zemindar he

(*d*) *Dāya Bhāga*, iii. 1, § 18, 19.

(*e*) *Manu*, ix. § 125, 126; *Raghoonath v. Hurrehur*, 7 S. D. 126^r(146); *Bhujangrav v. Malojirav*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 161; *Ramalakshmi v. Sivanantha*, 14 M. I. A. 570. In the two last cases it was suggested that perhaps a younger son by the wife first married might succeed in preference to an elder son by a junior wife. The contrary was held in the first case, and would probably be the law if the point should arise again. See as to the old law, *ante*, § 85.

(*f*) See pedigree in *Yenumula v. Yenumula*, 6 Mad. H. C. 93.

left a grandson, B., by an elder son, and a younger son X. Primogeniture. The latter got possession of the Zemindary, but B. brought a suit against him, and ultimately recovered possession. There were circumstances in the case which might have justified the decree on other grounds, but on the whole it must be taken that the Provincial Court, which tried the case, went on the broad principle that the son of a predeceased elder son was entitled to the Zemindary in preference to a surviving younger son. No appeal was preferred against the decree. The estate then passed to C., at whose death it was claimed by the plaintiff, as son of Y., the deceased elder brother of Z. The original Court held, amongst other grounds for dismissing the claim, that Z. was a nearer heir than the plaintiff. This decision was reversed by the Madras High Court, which held that by the ordinary law of primogeniture, applicable to impartible estates, the plaintiff represented the eldest line. It will be seen that there was an important distinction between the two disputed successions. In the first case B. was the grandson of the last male holder, and therefore, in an ordinary case of succession, would have as good a claim as his uncle X.; a son and a grandson being considered equally near, and equally efficacious (§ 460). But in the second case the plaintiff and Z. were cousins, and X. in an ordinary case of collateral succession the nearer takes before the more remote, as for instance, a brother before a nephew (§ 484, 485). This was the view submitted to the Judicial Committee. On the other hand it was argued that the property, though impartible, was still joint family property, and therefore passed by survivorship, in which case Y. was the heir expectant during his life, and at his death his rights passed on to the plaintiff who represented him. The Judicial Committee, however, found that there had been a partition of the whole property during the life of B., under which he took the Zemindary as separate estate. Consequently the widow of C. was the heir, and it was unnecessary to decide between the claims of the plaintiff and Z. (g).

(g) *Runganayakamma v. B. Ramaya*, 6 I. A. In the case of *Periasawmy v. Periasawmy*, 5 I. A. 61 the same point was argued, but not decided. There the converse question arose. The zemindary had been awarded to a person standing

Whole and half
blood.

Upon principle it would seem, that at the death of each holder the estate would go to the eldest member of the class of persons who, at that time, were his nearest heirs. If so, Z. was certainly nearer to C. than the plaintiff. This seems to have been the ground of the decision of the Judicial Committee, in a case relating to the Tipperah Râj, where the question was, whether an elder brother by the half blood, or a younger brother by the full blood, would be the next heir to a Râj. They were pressed with the argument that on the death of the previous holder, who was the father both of the deceased Râjah and of the claimants, the Râj had vested in all the brothers jointly, though of course it could only be held by one. If so, of course all the brothers were equally near to the father, and on the death of one it would survive to the eldest. But the Committee held that in the case of an impartible estate survivorship cannot exist, as being an incident of joint ownership, which is inconsistent with the separate ownership of the Râjah. Therefore, title by survivorship, where it varies from the ordinary rule of heirship, cannot, in the absence of custom, furnish the rule to ascertain the heir to a property which is solely owned and enjoyed, and which passes by inheritance to a single heir. Then upon the double ground of nearness of kin and religious efficacy, the whole blood was entitled in preference to the half blood (*h*); that is to say, they held that nothing vested in any member of the family until the death of the last holder, and that at his death the heir was the person who was nearest to him. Some of the language used by their Lordships, in their judgment seems inconsistent with the Shivagunga case, and those cases which have followed it (§ 451), but the decrees themselves, and the *ratio decidendi* in each, are perfectly in harmony. The Shivagunga case settled that where an impartible Zemindary was joint property, the heir to it must be sought among the male copercenary. That is to say, no female nor

in the same position as Z., and the widow, who was defendant, urged that the real heir was a person who stood in the same position as the plaintiff, and whose rights had not been noticed by the High Court.

(*h*) *Neelkisto Deb v. Beerchunder*, 12 M. I. A. 523, 540.

separated member could succeed. The Tipperah case decided, that amongst these coparceners the person to succeed was the one who was nearest the last male holder at the time of his death, and that the principle of survivorship could not be applied so as to give the succession to a person who was not the nearest heir.

§ 462. Illegitimate sons in the three higher classes never take as heirs, but are only entitled to maintenance (§ 399). It is said that by a special usage they may inherit, but in the only cases in which such a special usage was set up it was negatived (*i*). But the illegitimate son of a Çûdra may, under certain circumstances, inherit either jointly or solely. His rights have already been referred to under the head of Partition (§ 399), but it will be necessary to go a little more fully into them here. His position rests upon two texts. Manu says (*j*), "A son begotten by a man of the servile class on his female slave, or on the female slave of his male slave, may take a share of the heritage, if permitted (by the other sons)." Yâjñavalkya enlarges the rule as follows: "Even a son begotten by a Çûdra on a female slave may take a share by the father's choice. But, if the father be dead, the brethren should make him partaker of the moiety of a share; and one who has no brothers may inherit the whole property in default of daughters' sons" (*k*). The first question that arises upon these texts is as to the nature of the connection out of which the illegitimate son contemplated by them must issue. Are the texts to be taken literally, as denoting that the mother must be the slave of the father, or do they denote a son born from a concubine, or the offspring of a merely temporary intercourse? On this point there is a direct conflict of authority.

Illegitimate sons.

Illegitimate son of a Çûdra.

§ 463. Jímûta Vâhana, as translated by Mr. Colebrooke, takes the less strict view. He says in reference to Manu, "The son of a Çûdra by a female slave, or other unmarried woman, may share, &c.;" and he paraphrases the text of

Whether his mother must have been a slave.

(*i*) *Mohun Singh v. Chuman Rai*, 1 S. D. 23 (37); *Pershad Singh v. Muheshree*, 3 S. D. 132 (176).

(*j*) ix. § 179.

(*k*) Yâjñavalkya, ii. § 133, 134; Mitâksharâ, i. 12, § 1.

Meaning of
slave.

Yājñavalkya by the words "begotten on an unmarried woman, and having no brother, &c." (l) In a very recent case, however, which arose in Calcutta, Mr. Justice Mitter stated that the above passages of the *Dāya Bhāga* were incorrectly translated, and that the first passage should run, "The son of a *Çûdra* by an unmarried female slave, &c.;" and that the second passage should begin, "Having no other brother begotten on a married woman, he may take the whole property." The Court therefore held that the words "son of a female slave" must be literally interpreted, so far as the districts governed by Bengal law were concerned, and that an illegitimate son whose mother was not a slave could not inherit (m). Now there seems to be no ground for supposing that there is any difference in this point between the law of Bengal and the other provinces, as all the authorities rely upon the same texts. As slavery was abolished by Act V. of 1843, it follows, if the above construction is sound, that the inheritance of the illegitimate son of a *Çûdra*, born after that date, has now become impossible. On the other hand, the Bombay High Court in an equally recent case, give a literal translation of the text of *Jîmûta Vâhana*, which exactly corresponds with Mr. Colebrooke's translation (n). So Maheçvara renders the same text: "He being born of an unmarried woman, and having no brother born of a wedded wife," &c. (o) Prosonno Coomar Tagore renders the corresponding passage by Vachespâti Miśra: "A son of a *Çûdra* by an unmarried woman," (p) and the same rendering is given by Mr. Borradaile of the passage in the *Mayûkha* (q). If, however, the proper translation of the passage in the *Dāya Bhāga* be that which is given by Mr. Justice Mitter, then the question would be narrowed to this: What is meant by the term *Dâsi*, or female slave? The *Dattaka Mimâṃsâ*, in describing the slave's son (*Dâsi putra*), says, "A female

(l) *Dāya Bhāga*, ix. § 29, 31; 3 Dig. 143.

(m) *Narain Dhara v. Rakhal Gain*, 1 Calc. 1, citing 1 W. MacN. 18; 2 W. MacN. 15, n.; *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, v. § 30.

(n) 1 Bomb. L. R. 110.

(o) *Dāya Bhāga*, ix. § 31, note.

(p) *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, 274.

(q) V. May., iv. 4, § 32. The *Mitāksharâ*, i. 12, § 2, and the *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, v. § 30, only use the term "female slave."

purchased by price, who is enjoyed, is a slave. The son who is born on her is considered a slave son" (r). The point is discussed by the Bombay High Court, apparently without any knowledge of the Calcutta case, and they arrive at the conclusion that the word does not necessarily mean anything more, than an unmarried Çûdra woman kept as a concubine (s). In Madras it has frequently been held that the illegitimate son of a Çûdra will inherit, and, although it has not been necessary to decide the point, it has been stated, or assumed, that the mother need not be a slave in the strict sense of that term. In Southern India, at all events, the word *Dâsi* is invariably applied to a dancing girl in a pagoda (t). And the Judicial Committee has also stated, though without reference to this point, that "they are satisfied that in the Çûdra caste illegitimate children may inherit" (u). Throughout the *futwâhs* recorded by Messrs. West and Bühler, the term slave girl, or *Dâsi*, and concubine, appear to be treated as convertible terms (x). In a very recent case the Allahabad High Court followed the Madras and Bombay ruling in preference to that of the Calcutta Judges. (*Sarasuti v. Mannu*, 2 All., 134.)

Meaning of
slave.

§ 464. Probably in former times the permanent concubine was always a slave, that is, a person purchased, or born in the house, and incapable of leaving it at her own free will. But the principle of the rule seems to have been, that as the marriage tie was less strict among Çûdras than among the higher classes, so the issue of women who were permanently kept by Çûdras, though not actually married to them, was regarded as something between a legitimate son and the mere bastard offspring of a promiscuous or illegal intercourse. Accordingly it has been held in Madras and Bombay that the son born of an absolutely prohibited union, such as an incestuous or adulterous connection, could not

Connection
must be con-
tinuous,
and lawful.

(r) Dattaka Mimâṁsâ, iv. § 75, 76.

(s) *Rahi v. Govinda*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 97.

(t) *Chendrabhan v. Chingooram*, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 50; *Pandaiya v. Puli Telaver*, 1 Mad. H. C. 478, affirmed 13 M. I. A. 141; *Muttusawmy v. Venkatasubha*, 2 Mad. H. C. 293; 12 M. I. A. 203; *Datti Parisi v. Datti Bungaru*, 4 Mad. H. C. 204; *Krishnanma v. Papa*, ib. 234. See too *per* Mr. Colebrooke, 2 Stra. H. L. 68.

(u) *Per Giffard*, L. J., 13 M. I. A. 159.

(x) W. & B. 104—110.

inherit, even to a Çûdra, and it was suggested, though not absolutely decided, that "the intercourse between the parents must have been a continuous one; there must have been an established concubinage, or, in other words, the woman must have been one exclusively kept by the man (y)." In Bombay it is said by the High Court, that the condition that the Çûdra woman should never have been married, has in practice been disregarded. But the cases referred to by the Court are all cases in which the subsequent connection with the previously married woman was not an adulterous one, but was sanctioned by usage having the force of law (z).

Share of illegitimate son.

§ 465. Supposing an illegitimate Çûdra to be entitled, the next question would be as to his rights. Upon this the Mitâksharâ says in explanation of the texts of Manu and Yâjñavalkya (§ 462), "The son begotten by a Çûdra on a female slave, obtains a share by the father's choice, or at his pleasure. But after the demise of the father, if there be sons of a wedded wife, let these brothers allow the son of the female slave to participate for half a share, that is, let them give him half as much as the amount of one brother's allotment; however, should there be no sons of a wedded wife, the son of the female slave takes the whole estate, provided there be no daughters of a wife, nor sons of daughters. But if there be such, the son of the female slave participates for half a share only (a)." The Bengal authorities are to the same effect, but say nothing of his right to share with the daughters (b). The only writer who refers to his right where there is a widow, is the author of the *Dattaka Chandrikâ*. He says, "If any, even in the series of heirs down to the daughter's son, exist, the son by a female slave does not take the whole estate, but on the contrary shares equally with such heir (c)."

(y) *Datti Parisi v. D. Bungaru*, 4 Mad. H. C. 204, 215; *Venkatachella v. Parvatham*, 8 Mad. H. C. 134; *Rahi v. Govind*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 97. See ante, § 71.

(z) 1 Bomb. L. R. 113.

(a) Mitâksharâ, i. 12, § 2.

(b) *Dâya Bhâga*, ix. § 29—31; D. K. S. vi. § 32—35; 3 Dig. 143.

(c) *Dattaka Chandrikâ*, v. § 30, 31.

This is also the opinion of a pandit whose futwah is given in W. & B. 108. On the other hand, the editors, in a remark appended to that futwah, say, "The illegitimate son would inherit the whole estate of his father, even though a widow of the latter might be living." This remark is adopted by the High Court of Bombay, and they state that the illegitimate son will also share the property with the daughter and the daughter's son, while there is a widow in existence, subject of course to the charge of maintaining the widow (*d*). The result would be, that wherever there was an illegitimate son, the widow would be entitled to no more than maintenance. Also, what is even more anomalous, that a daughter and a daughter's son would in such a case inherit to the exclusion of the widow, and maintain her, though it is a first principle that neither can ever take, except in default of her.

§ 466. It certainly would require very strong authority to establish such an abnormal state of things. Yet there is absolutely no authority for it, except the remark of Messrs. West and Bühler, which itself rests upon nothing (*e*). The chapters of the Hindu law-books, which treat of a widow's estate, nowhere suggest such a limitation of her rights. No text writer, no decision alludes to such a possibility. The passages which discuss the position of an illegitimate son, do not even mention the widow, and seem to me not to involve the doctrine of the Bombay High Court, by necessary, or even by probable, implication. Suppose we try a perfectly literal interpretation of the texts upon the subject. Yājñavalkya says that an illegitimate son without brothers may inherit the whole estate in default of daughters' sons. The obvious meaning is that until the line, which terminates with a daughter's son, is exhausted, he cannot take the whole estate, but is only entitled to a part of it. Vijñaneśvara makes this even clearer, by saying that a daughter also excludes him from the whole estate, leaving him still

His share

where there
is a widow.

(*d*) *Rahi v. Govinda Valad*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 97, 104.

(*e*) There is a futwah quoted at W. & B. p. 106, Q. 7, 8, in which illegitimate sons are made to exclude a widow. But the widow in question was one who had been married twice. Such a widow appears not to be entitled to the full rights of a widow married as a virgin. See W. & B. 112, Q. 16.

Share of illegitimate Çâdra.

entitled to part. He does not think it necessary to say the same as to the widow, who ranks before the daughter. Then as to the intermediate period, he is to have a share, which is to be half the share of a son. The literal meaning of this is, that in each given instance you are to ascertain what share he would take if he were legitimate, and then give him half of it. Suppose there is a legitimate son, then, if he also were legitimate, the estate would be divided into moieties, of which each would take one. Being illegitimate, he only takes half of the moiety, leaving the remaining three-quarters to his brother (*f*). Suppose there is no legitimate son, but a widow, daughter, or daughter's son; now, if he were legitimate, he would take the whole. Being illegitimate, he takes only half, the other half going to the widow, daughter, or daughter's son, respectively. If there are none of these, or upon the extinction of all, he takes the whole. Now this is exactly what Devaṇḍa Bhatta says in the passage above referred to (*g*). And the same is substantially the view taken by the Bombay Çâstras quoted in W. & B., though they differ as to the exact proportions taken, and by Mr. W. MacNaghten and Jagannâtha (*h*). I am not aware of any cases in which the point has arisen or been decided. In the Bombay case the whole discussion was *obiter dictum*, as the Court decided that the claimant did not come within the terms of the texts at all.

Bastards inherit to each other.

§ 467. Illegitimate sons can only take to their father's estate. They have no claim to inherit to collaterals (*i*). It is also to be remembered that, as the English rule which prevents bastards tracing to their father has no existence in Hindu law, so the fact of illegitimacy does not prevent bastard brothers claiming to each other. Accordingly

(*f*) This is the view taken by one Çâstra, W. & B. 108. But according to others the meaning is that the division is to be made so that the legitimate son shall have double the share of the illegitimate, that is, in the case put, the former would have two-thirds and the latter one-third; W. & B. 107, 110. A similar difference exists as to the mode in which the fourth share to be received by a daughter on partition was to be calculated, *ante*, § 406, or by an adopted son in the case of the subsequent birth of a legitimate son; *ante*, § 157.

(*g*) Dattaka Chandrikâ, v. § 30, 31.

(*h*) W. & B. 108—110, 113, 115; acc. 1 W. MacN. 18; 3 Dig. 143.

(*i*) 2 W. MacN. 15, n.; *Nissar Murtojah v. Kowar Dhumvunt*, Marsh. 609.

where two take jointly, the estate passes by survivorship in the ordinary way. Still less is there any absence of heritable blood as between bastards and their mother (*k*).

§ 468. WIDOW.—In default of male issue, joint or separate, the next heir is the widow (*l*). Where there are several widows, all inherit jointly, according to a text of the Mitâksharâ, which should come in at the end of ii. 1, § 5, but which has been omitted in Mr. Colebrooke's translation: "The singular number, 'wife,' in the text of Yâjñavalkya, signifies the kind. Hence if there are several wives belonging to the same, or different classes, they divide, and take it (*n*)."^{Several widows.} All the wives take together as a single heir with survivorship, and no part of the husband's property passes to any more distant relation till all are dead (*n*). Where the property is impartible, as being a Râj or ancient Zemindary, of course it can only be held by one, and then the senior widow is entitled to hold it, subject to the right of the others to maintenance (*o*). In other cases the senior widow would, as in the case of an ordinary coparcenership, have a preferable right to the care and management of the joint property. But she would hold it as manager for all, with equality of rights, not merely on her own account, with an obligation to maintain the others (*p*).

§ 469. Where several widows hold an estate jointly, or where one holds as manager for the others, each has a right to her proportionate share of the produce of the property, and of the benefits derivable from its enjoyment. And the

(*k*) *Venkataram v. Venkata Lutchmee*, 2 N. C. 304; *Pandaya Telavar v. Puli Talaver*, 1 Mad H. C. 478; *Mayna Bai v. Uttaram*, 2 Mad. H. C. 197; S. M. I. A. 425; W. & B. 164.

(*l*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 1; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 1, § 43; V. May., iv. 8, § 1—7; *Balkrishna v. Savitribai*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 51. See ante, § 445, *et. seq.* So the widow succeeds at once on renunciation of his rights by the prior heir. *Ruvee Bhadr v. Roopshunker*, 2 Bor. 656, 665; *Ram Kannye v. Meernomoyee*, 2 W. R. 49.

(*m*) See as to the omission, Goldstücker, 15; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 1, § 47, note 2; 3 Mad. H. C. 51.

(*n*) 1 W. MacN. 20; 2 W. MacN. 37; F. MacN. 6; *Streemutty v. Ramconny*, 2 M. Dig. 80; *Rumea v. Bhagee*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 66; *Jijoyamba v. Kamakshi*, 3 Mad. H. C. 424; *Bhugwandeem v. Myna Bai*, 11 M. I. A. 487; *Nilamani v. Radhamani*, 4 I. A. 212. The contrary opinion of Jîmûta Vâhana is not now law; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 1, § 15, 47.

(*o*) *Vutsavoy v. Vutsavoy*, 1 Mad. Dec. 453; *Seenevullala v. Tungama*, 2 Mad. Dec. 40.

(*p*) *Jijoyamba v. Kamakshi*, *ub. sup.*

Several widows. widows may be placed in possession of separate portions of the property, either by agreement among themselves, or by decree of Court, where from the nature of the property, or from the conduct of the co-widows, such a separate possession appears to be the only effectual mode of securing to each the full enjoyment of her rights. But no partition can be effected between them, whether by consent or by adverse decree, which would convert the joint estate into an estate in severalty, and put an end to the right of survivorship. In the last case cited below, it was suggested that the widows might possibly enter into such an agreement as would bind each to an absolute surrender of all interest in the share of the other, so as to let in the next heirs of the husband after the death of that other (*q*). It is difficult, however, to see how such an agreement could bind the surviving widow, for the benefit of any heir of the husband who was not a party to the contract. On the same principle of joint tenancy with survivorship, no alienation by one widow can have any validity against the others without their consent, or an established necessity (*r*).

Effect of want
of chastity.

§ 470. Whatever may have been the ancient law on the subject (§ 86), it is quite clear now that chastity is a condition precedent to the taking by the widow of her husband's estate (*s*). But a question upon which there has been much conflict of authority arises, whether the incontinence of a widow is like any other ground of disability, which only prevents the inheritance from vesting, or whether it will divest her estate when she has once become entitled to it in possession. The latter view was stated by Mr. Ellis in Madras, and was adopted by Sir Thomas Strange, who says, "Hence adultery in the wife during coverture bars her right of inheritance, divesting it also after it has vested, the Hindu widow resembling in this respect the condition of ours in most instances of copyhold

(*q*) *Jijoyamba v. Kamakshi*, *Bhugwandeem v. Myna Bai*, *Nilamani v. Radhamani*, *ub. sup.*, *Rindamma v. Venkataramappa*, 3 Mad. H. C. 268.

(*r*) *Bhugwandeem v. Myna Baee*, *ub. sup.* See *post*, Chap. XX.

(*s*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 1, § 37—39; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, xi. 1, § 12—21; *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, 289—91; *V. May.*, iv. 8, § 2, 6, 8, 9; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 1, § 47, 48, 56. See all the cases discussed, *Kery Kolitany v. Moneeram*, 13 B. L. R. 1.

dower, and holding it like her, *dum casta fuerit* only" (t). Whether it devests her estate. This seems also to have been the opinion which originally prevailed in Bengal. In 1792 the Supreme Court nonsuited a widow in an action of ejectment, her incontinence after her husband's death being established (u). The same view was expressed by Jagannâtha, and by the Sudr pandits in two *futwahs*, the latest of which was in 1811 (v). In a case in 1819 in the Supreme Court, where the question was whether a widow lost her right of inheritance by ceasing to live with her husband's relatives, the pandits answered that her right would not be forfeited if, from any other cause but for unchaste purposes, she ceased so to reside (w). They assumed apparently that residence with a paramour would operate as a forfeiture. Mr. Elberling, writing in 1844, understood the law in the same way (x). The same principle was laid down by a pandit in Poonah in 1850 (y). A similar practice is stated to have prevailed in the Punjâb until 1868 (z), and there is an *obiter dictum* to the same effect by the Court of the N. W. Provinces in 1870 (a). On the other hand, Mr. Colebrooke was of opinion that although an unchaste woman was excluded from the inheritance, yet that after the property had vested in her by inheritance, she would not forfeit it, unless for loss of caste, unexpiated by penance, and unredeemed by atonement. This seems also to have been the opinion of the pandit in reference to whose *futwah* he was consulted. But as regards the latter, it does not appear clear whether the vicious conduct to which he referred meant unchastity, or only extravagance (b). The same view was taken by a pandit of Khandesh, who pronounced that if a woman was chaste at her husband's death, she would be his heir, though she afterwards became

(t) 2 Stra. H. L. 273; 1 Stra. H. L. 163.

(u) *Radamoney v. Neelmoney*, Montr. 314.

(v) 3 Dig. 479, 576; 2 W. MacN. 20, 21.

(w) *Cossinath v. Hurrosoondery*, 2 M. Dig. 198.

(x) "The enjoyment of the property is given to her upon two conditions:—
1. That she remains chaste; 2. That she does not make waste." Elb. § 164.

(y) W. & B. 145.

(z) Punjâb Customs, 61.

(a) *Mt. Deokee v. Sookhdeo*, 2 N. W. P., H. C. 363.

(b) 2 Stra. H. L. 272.

Whether incontinence deprives her estate.

the mistress of another man (c). So the Supreme Court of Calcutta decided in 1851, that a widow's estate could not be taken from her by the reversioners on the ground of her unchastity. But they seem, in part at least, to have arrived at this conclusion from the belief that there was no ruling to the contrary, which was erroneous (d). The question however came again before the High Court of Bengal twice in 1869, and it was then decided that mere incontinence in a widow did not divest her right to an inheritance which had once vested in her; that incontinence coupled with loss of caste might have had that effect, but that any disability arising from the latter cause was now removed by Act XXI of 1850 (e). An exactly similar decision had been given in Bombay in 1865, where the Court held that a widow would be entitled to recover a share of her husband's estate from her co-widow, even though she had lived with a paramour after the husband's death, and had been excluded from caste in consequence. This decision appears to have been subsequently followed in the Punjab, in opposition to their former practice (f).

Full Bench decision.

§ 471. Under this conflict of opinion the case arose again in 1873, on appeal from a Court in Assam. There a suit was brought by the next reversioner against the widow, and in appeal the decree was given in his favour, on the ground that since her husband's death the widow had given birth to an illegitimate son. The case was referred to a Full Bench of the High Court of Bengal, and the widow's right was affirmed by the Chief Justice and six other Judges; three (Kemp, Glover, and Mitter, JJ.) dissenting (g). The whole law bearing on the subject was elaborately examined and canvassed on both sides, and it may safely be said, that if the point is not finally settled by the ruling of the majority, at all events all the materials for its settlement are furnished by the judgments on both sides.

(c) W. & B. 281. (d) *Saummoney Dossee v. Nemychurn*, 2 T. & B. 300.

(e) *Strimati Matingini v. Strimati Jaykali*, 5 B. L. R. 466; *Abhiram Das v. Striram Das*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 421. See as to the effect of Act XXI of 1850, *Raj Koonwaree v. Golabee*, S. D. of 1858, 1891; *Kery Kolitany v. Moneeram*, 13 B. L. R. 1.

(f) *Parvati v. Bhiku*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 25; Punjab Customs, 61.

(g) *Kery Kolitany v. Moneeram Kolita*, 13 B. L. R. 1.

The opinion of the minority, as represented by Mr. J. Mitter, *Kery Kolitany v. Moneeram.* was founded upon the principle, that the widow took the estate for the purpose of ministering to the religious wants of her husband, and that her continued capacity to perform these services was essential to the continuance of her right to hold the property. Incontinence made her absolutely and permanently unfit any longer to fulfil these religious duties, and therefore necessarily entailed a forfeiture of her right to retain the property. On the other hand it was considered by the majority, that although religious benefit to her husband might be the reason for her taking the estate at first, still that subsequent incapacity to confer benefit need not involve the divesting of that right; any more than such a consequence would follow in the case of a daughter, who subsequently became a childless widow, or a son who subsequently became insane. That the texts from which it was inferred that a widow must not only be chaste, but remain chaste, did not carry with them any clause of forfeiture in the event of subsequent incontinence. And that even if the original conception of a widow's rights might have been restricted in the manner contended for, that conception had been enlarged by subsequent usage, and was not applicable to the present state of society. The decision of the majority of the Calcutta Judges has been lately followed in two similar cases before the Allahabad High Court (*Nehalo v. Kishen Lal*, 2 All., 150; *Bhawani v. Mahtab Kuar*, ib., 171,) the decision itself is under appeal to the Privy Council.

§ 472. The second marriage of a widow was formerly unlawful, except where it was sanctioned by local custom (§ 87), consequently it entailed the forfeiture of a widow's estate, either as being a signal instance of incontinence, or as necessarily involving degradation from caste (*h*). Even where second marriages were allowed in Bombay, the wife was compelled to give up the property she had inherited from her first husband (*i*). This seems also to have been

Second marriage.

(*h*) 1 Stra. H. L. 242; 1 W. & B 99; 13 B. L. R. 75.

(*i*) *Hurkoornwur v. Rutton Baee*, 1 Bor. 431; *Treekumjee v. Mt. Laroo*, 2 Bor. 361; Steele, 26, 159, 163.

Act authorising
widow
marriage.

the custom among the Tamil tribes, upon the evidence of the Thesawaleme (*k*), and the same principle has been recently applied by the High Court of Madras in the case of a second marriage of a Maraver woman (*l*). The marriage of widows is now legalised in all cases. But the Act which permits it provides that "All rights and interests which any widow may have in her deceased husband's property, by way of maintenance, or by inheritance to her husband or to his lineal successors, or by virtue of any will or testamentary provision conferring upon her, without express permission to re-marry, only a limited interest in such property, with no power of alienating the same, shall, upon her re-marriage, cease and determine as if she had then died; and the next heirs of her deceased husband, or other persons entitled to the property on her death, shall thereupon succeed to the same" (*m*). It has been held that this section only operates as a forfeiture of existing rights, and creates no disability to take future interests in the family of the widow's late husband. Therefore that she may succeed as heir to the estate of her son by a first marriage, who had died after her second marriage (*n*). The following decision appears more questionable. A Hindu widow became a convert to Muhammedanism, and then married a Muhammedan. The Court held that she was entitled to recover the property of her first husband, on the ground that having ceased to be a Hindu before marriage, she did not come within the terms of Act XV of 1856, and that conversion was no longer a bar to inheritance (*o*). It certainly does seem remarkable that a widow, who would have forfeited her rights of inheritance by a second marriage, if she had remained a Hindu, should be restored to those rights by adding apostacy to re-marriage. It may be suggested, that either Act XV of 1856 applied to her case, or it did not. If it did, then she came under the disability

Conversion to
Muhammed-
anism.

(*k*) Thesawaleme, i. § 10.

(*l*) *Murugayi v. Viramakali*, 1 Mad. L. R. 226.

(*m*) Act XV of 1856, s. 2.

(*n*) *Akora Suth v. Boreani*, 2 B. L. R., A. C. 199; *Mt. Rupan v. Hukmi Singh*, Punjab Customs, 99.

(*o*) *Gopal Singh v. Dhungazee*, 3 W. R. 206.

created by s. 2. If it did not, then she was never relieved from the disability created by the Hindu law.

§ 473. THE DAUGHTER comes next to the widow, taking after her or in default of her (*p*), except where by some special local or family custom she is excluded (*q*). She is under the same obligation to chastity as a widow; therefore as the law seems now to be settled, incontinence will prevent her taking the estate, but will not deprive her of it if she has once taken it (*r*). So she will be excluded by incurable blindness, or any other ground of disability, such as would disqualify a male (*s*). But it must be remembered that a daughter can only inherit to her own father. The daughter of the brother, the uncle, or the nephew is not an heir (§ 455). If a son dies before his father, leaving a daughter, and then the father dies, also leaving a daughter, the inheritance will pass to the daughter of the father (*t*). And so, if one of two undivided brothers under Mitāksharā law dies first, leaving a daughter, and afterwards the surviving brother dies childless, the estate will pass to his collateral relations, not to the daughter of the first brother (*u*). Of course in Bengal the daughter would at once have taken the share of her deceased father. The case of the father's daughter, claiming as sister, has already been discussed (§ 453). In Bombay, a granddaughter, a brother's daughter, and a sister's daughter are held capable of inheriting, on the principle which prevails in Western India, that females born in the family are *gotraja sapindas* (*x*). They come in, however, not as daughters but as distant kindred.

§ 474. The mode in which daughters inherit *inter se* depends upon the school of law which governs the case. The different principles which prevail upon this point in

Daughter,

how excluded:

only inherits to her own father,

except in Bombay.

Precedence.

(*p*) Mitāksharā, ii. 2; Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 2; V. May., iv. 8, § 10; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 292; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 1.

(*q*) See as to such customs, Perry, O. C. 117; *Bhau Nanaji v. Sundrabai*, 11 Bomb. 249; *Russic Lall v. Purush Munnee*, S. D. of 1847, 205; *Hiranath Koer v. Ram Narayen*, 9 B. L. R. 274; 2 I. A. 263; Punjab Customs, 16, 25, 37, 47.

(*r*) *Per Mitter*, J., 13 B. L. R. 48; *ante*, § 471; *Ramnath Tolapattro v. Durga Sundari Debi*, 4 Calc. 550.

(*s*) *Bakubai v. Manchabai*, 2 Bomb. 5.

(*t*) *Sooranamy v. Venkataroyen*, Mad. Dec. of 1853, 157; 2 W. MacN. 176.

(*u*) *Soobba Moodelly v. Auchalay*, Mad. Dec. of 1854, 153.

(*x*) W. & B. 183, 185, 207, 208. See *ante*, § 454.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Bengal. | <p>Bengal and the other provinces have been stated already (§ 443). Mr. W. MacNaghten states the order of precedence in the different provinces as follows (y). “According to the doctrine of the Bengal school the unmarried daughter is first entitled to the succession; if there be no maiden daughter, then the daughter who has, and the daughter who is likely to have male issue, are together entitled to the succession, and on failure of either of them, the other takes the heritage. Under no circumstances can the daughters who are either barren, or widows destitute of male issue, or the mothers of daughters only, inherit the property (z). But there is a difference in the law as it obtains in Benares on this point; that school holding that a maiden is in the first instance entitled to the property; failing her that the succession devolves on the married daughters who are indigent, to the exclusion of the wealthy daughters; that in default of indigent daughters, the wealthy daughters are competent to inherit; but no preference is given to a daughter who has, or is likely to have male issue, over a daughter who is barren or a childless widow (a). According to the law of Mithilâ, an unmarried daughter is preferred to one who is married; failing her, married daughters are entitled to the inheritance. But there is no distinction made among the married daughters; and one who is married, and has, or is likely to have male issue, is not preferred to one who is widowed or barren. Nor is there any distinction made between indigence and wealth.” The law of the Mitâksharâ has been also stated in accordance with this view by Mr. Colebrooke and the High Court of Bengal and the Privy Council (b). But, as I have already observed (§ 443), the <i>Smṛiti Chandrikâ</i> follows the doctrine of religious efficacy so far as to exclude barren daughters, and</p> |
| Precedence. | |
| Benares. | |
| Mithilâ. | |
| Smṛiti Chandrikâ. | |

(y) 1 W. MacN. 22.

(z) See also 2 W. MacN. 39, 44, 46, 49, 58; V. Darp., 166, 172. Anon., 2 M. Dig. 17; *Rajchunder v. Mt. Dhunmunnee*, 3 S. D. 362 (482); *Binode Koomaree v. Purdhan Gopal*, 2 W. R. 176. But since a widow may now re-marry (§ 472) and have male issue, it has been held that even in Bengal widowhood is not *per se* an absolute ground of exclusion. *Streemutty Binola v. Dangoo Kansaree*, 19 W. R. 189.

(a) As to Bombay law, acc. *Bakubai v. Manchabai*, 2 Bomb. 5; *Poli v. Narotum*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 183.

(b) 2 Stra. H. L. 242; 2 W. R. 176; 5 I. A. 46.

Madras pandits have stated in accordance with it, that a daughter with male issue excludes a sonless daughter (c).

§ 475. Where daughters of the same class exist they all take jointly in the same manner as widows (§ 468) with survivorship (d). If they choose to divide the property for the greater convenience of enjoyment they can do so, but they cannot thereby create estates of severalty, which would be alienable or descendible in any different manner (e). If at the death of the last survivor another class of daughters exists, who have been previously excluded, they will come in as next heirs, if admissible (f). And although according to Bengal law a childless or barren widow cannot inherit originally, still if she has already taken as one of a class of sisters, that which would have been an original disqualification, will not prevent her taking the whole by survivorship on the death of her co-heiresses (g). Where property is impartible, the eldest daughter of all the sisters, or of the class which takes precedence, is the heir (h).

Several daughters.

Succession of several daughters.

§ 476. The only exception to the right of any daughter (otherwise admissible) to succeed before a daughter's son, is a case which only applies to Bengal. It is thus stated by Mr. MacNaghten: "If one of several daughters who had, as maidens, succeeded to their father's property, die leaving sons, and sisters, or sisters' sons, then, according to the law of Bengal, the sons alone take the share to which their mother was entitled, to the exclusion of the sisters, or sisters' sons" (i). This exception rests on the authority of Çrî Kṛishṇa Terkâlankâra alone. In the corresponding passage of the Dâya Bhâga, the case of the maiden daughter is made no exception to the general rule, that on the death of any daughter the estate which was hers becomes the

Exception to rule.

(c) 2 Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 2, § 21; Stra. Man. § 328; *Dorasawmy v. Oomamal*, Mad. Dec. of 1852, 177. Semb., *Gocoolanund v. Wooma Daee*, 15 B. L. R. 405; 5 I. A. 46.

(d) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 2, § 15, 30; V. May., iv. 8, § 10; *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga*, 6 Mad. H. C. 310.

(e) F. MacN. 55; *per curiam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 317.

(f) *Dowlut Kooer v. Burma Deo*, 22 W. R. 55.

(g) *Aumirtolall Bose v. Rajonee Kant*, 2 I. A. 113.

(h) *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga*, 6 Mad. H. C. 310.

(i) 1 W. MacN. 24; D. K. S. i. 3. § 3; *Mt. Bijia Debia v. Mt. Unnapoorna*, 3 S. D. 26 (35); *per curiam*, 22 W. R. 55; 6 Mad. H. C. 332.

Position of
daughter's son.

Origin of his
right.

✓ property of those persons, a married daughter or others, who would regularly succeed if she had never existed (*k*). There seems to be no reason for the alleged rule, and its soundness is doubted, with much apparent justice, by Āmachurn Sircar (*l*).

§ 477. THE DAUGHTER'S SON, though a *sapinda*, is not a *gotraja sapinda*. He is nearer in degree, but exactly similar in class, to a sister's son or an aunt's son, who only come in as *bandhus* (*m*). Yet, according to all systems, even those which prefer the *gotraja sapindas* as far as the seventh degree, and the Samānodakas as far as the fourteenth degree, to the *bandhus*, he comes in before brothers and other more remote *sapindas*. The cause of this peculiar favour is to be found in the old practice of appointing a daughter to raise up issue for a man who had none. The daughter so appointed was herself considered as equal to a son. Naturally her son was equivalent to a grandson, and as the merits of son and grandson are equal, he ranked as a son (*n*). Consequently we find him enumerated among the subsidiary sons, and taking a very high rank among them, generally second or third (*o*). Subsequently the appointment of a daughter to raise up issue for her father became obsolete (*p*). But the fact of the nearness of daughter and daughter's son remained, and their natural claim to succession on the ground of mere consanguinity recommended itself for general acceptance. The daughter's son ceased to rank as son, but he retained his place next in succession to the daughter, or where there was no daughter (*q*). In some parts of Northern India he is excluded by special custom (*r*).

The daughter's son is not enumerated in the list of heirs

(*k*) Dāya Bhāṣā, xi. 2, § 30.

(*l*) V. Darp., 167.

(*m*) Ante, § 428.

(*n*) Mann, ix. § 127—136; Vasishṭa, xvii. § 12; ante, § 442.

(*o*) See table, ante, § 63.

(*p*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, x. § 5, 6. See question whether this is so raised, but not decided. *Thakoor Jeebnath v. Court of Wards*, 2 I. A. 163.

(*q*) Mitāksharā, ii. 2, § 6; Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 2, § 28; V. May., iv 8, § 13; Dāya Bhāṣā, xi. 2, § 17—29; D. K. S. i. 4; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 294.

(*r*) Punjab Customs, 16, 27.

by Yājñavalkya (s), and from this it was at one time suggested by some commentators that his right did not accrue till all those who were enumerated had been exhausted (t). Mr. W. MacNaghten also states that he is not recognized as an heir by the Mithilā school (u). But this seems to be incorrect, even as regards the Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, which appears to admit him after both parents (x). It is now settled, however, after an elaborate examination of all the Mithilā authorities, that the daughter's son is admitted by them after the daughter just as elsewhere (y).

Mithilā.

§ 478. A daughter's son can never succeed to the estate of his grandfather, so long as there is in existence any daughter who is entitled to take, either as heir or by survivorship to her other sisters (z). The only exception is that which has been already referred to (§ 476) as existing in Bengal, where a daughter who took as a maiden dies leaving a son. The reason is that he takes, not as heir to any daughter who may have died, but as heir to his own grandfather, and, of course, cannot take at all so long as there is a nearer heir in existence. For the same reason, sons by different daughters all take *per capita* and not *per stirpes*, that is to say, if there are two daughters, one of whom has three sons, and the other has four sons, on the death of the first daughter, the whole property passes to the second, and on her death, it passes to the seven sons in equal shares (a). And on the same principle, where the estate is impartible, it passes at the death of the last daughter to the eldest of all the grandsons then living, and not to the eldest son of the last daughter who held the estate (b). It was laid down by the Bengal pandits in one case, that if property passes

He succeeds after all daughters. ✓

Takes *per capita*. ✓

(s) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 135, 136.
 (t) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 27; D. K. S. i. 4, § 3.
 (u) 1 W. MacN. 23; and so the pandits, *Pokhnarain v. Mt. Seesphool*, 3 S. D. 114 (152).
 (x) Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 294.
 (y) *Surja Kumari v. Gandhrap Singh*, 6 S. D. 140 (168).
 (z) *Aumirtolall v. Rajoneekant*, 2 I. A. 113; *Sastri Anandayan v. Vengu Annal*, Mad. Dec. of 1861, 137; 1 W. MacN. 24; 2 W. M. 44, 57; *Mt. Ramdan v. Beharee Lall*, 1 N. W. P. 200; *Baijnath v. Mahabir*, 1 All. 608; *Jamiyatram v. Bai Jamna*, 2 Bomb. H. C. 10, *contra* is now overruled. See 5 Bomb. O. C. 139; *Sibchunder Mullick v. Sreemutty Treepoorah*, Fulton, 98.
 (a) 1 W. MacN. 24; 1 Stra. H. L. 139; 3 Dig. 501; *Ramdhun v. Kishenkanth*, 3 S. D. 100 (133).
 (b) *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga*, 6 Mad. H. C. 310.

to daughter's sons, any such sons born afterwards will also take shares, in reduction of the shares already taken (c). But this assumes that a daughter capable of producing sons is still alive. If so the grandsons could not take at all, unless in the case of sons by the maiden daughter, which is considered by the Dāya-krahma-sangraha to be an exception (§ 476).

Is full owner.

Daughter's son
has no vested
right.

Daughter's
daughter.

Precedence.

§ 479. A daughter's son, on whom the inheritance has once actually fallen, takes it as full owner, and thereupon he becomes a new stock of descent and on his death the succession passes to his heir, and not back again to the heir of his grandfather (d). But until the death of the last daughter capable of being an heiress, he takes no interest whatever, and therefore can transmit none. Therefore, if he should die before the last of such daughters leaving a son, that son would not succeed, because he belongs to a completely different family, and he would offer no oblation to the maternal grandfather of his own father (e). Nor can the daughter's daughter ever succeed, except in Bombay, whether her mother has taken or not, because she confers no benefits on her maternal grandfather, and is estranged from his lineage (f).

§ 480. PARENTS.—The line of descent from the owner being now exhausted, the next to inherit are his parents. And here, for the first time, there is a variance between the different schools of law as to the order in which they take. The right of the mother as an heir was very early recognized (§ 444), but her precedence as regards the father, who was also stated to be an heir, was left uncertain. The Mitāksharā gives the preference to the mother on the ground of propinquity, and is followed in Mithilā by the Vivāda Chintāmaṇi; and this is stated by Mr. W. MacNaghten to be the law of Benares and Mithilā (g). The Smṛiti Chandrikā prefers

(c) *Mt. Solukna v. Ramdolal*, 1 S. D. 324 (434).

(d) 3 Dig. 494, 502; *Ramjoy Singh v. Tarrachund*, 2 M. Dig. 79.

(e) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 2; iv. 3, § 34; *Ulas Coonwur v. Agund Rai*, 3 S. D. 37 (50); *Senkul Taven v. Aurulananda*, Mad. Dec. of 1862, 27. See to the contrary, but I think erroneously, *Sheo Sehāi v. Omed Konwur*, 6 S. D. 301 (378); *Doe v. Ganpat*, Perry, O. C. 133.

(f) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 2; F. MacN. 6; W. & B. 191, 207.

(g) Mitāksharā, ii. 3. See Notes by Colebrooke. Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 293, 294; 2 W. MacN. 55, n. : ante, § 436.

the father, upon the authority of a text of Bhṛat Viṣṇu (*h*). The Mādhavīya leaves the point undecided, and Varadrājah, apparently following Āṅgīrṣha, seems to make both inherit together (*i*). Āmbhu says that the point is immaterial, as whichever of the two takes will take for the benefit of the other (*k*). In Bengal it is quite settled that the father takes before the mother, both on the express authority of Viṣṇu, and upon principles of religious efficacy (*l*). The Mayūkhā takes the same view, and a futwā to the same effect is recorded from Poonah. But Messrs. West and Bühler adopt the opposite order on the authority of the Mitāksharā (*m*).

§ 481. According to Bengal law a stepmother does not Stepmother. succeed to her stepson. This would necessarily be so upon the principles of Jīmūta Vāhana, as she does not participate in the oblations offered by such stepson (*n*). The Mitāksharā does not notice the point, but the reasons given by Vijñaneśvara for allowing the mother to inherit, viz., her close relationship to her son, seem to show that he could only have had the natural mother in view (*o*). The Bengal pandits have, on several occasions, asserted that the word *mātā* in the Mitāksharā includes a stepmother, and, in accordance with that view, it was decided that a woman in Orissa would inherit to her stepson (*p*). These opinions, however, were reviewed by the Full Bench of the Bengal High Court in a case from Mithilā, and it was decided that a stepmother was equally excluded by the Mitāksharā and the Dāya Bhāga. The same rule applies *à fortiori* to higher ascendants, such as a grandmother (*q*). The Pandits in Western India seem to take the same view, though not very distinctly, but Messrs. West and Bühler argue in favour

(*h*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 3, § 9.

(*i*) Mādhavīya, § 38; Varadrājah, 36. See 3 Dig. 480.

(*k*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 3, § 8.

(*l*) Viṣṇu, xvii. § 6, 7; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 3; D. K. S. i. 5; 3 Dig. 502—505; 2 W. MacN. 54; *Hemluta Deba v. Goluck Chunder*, 7 S. D. 108 (127).

(*m*) V. May., iv. 8. § 14; W. & B. 52, 158.

(*n*) Dāya Bhāga, iii. 2, § 30; xi. 6, § 3; D. K. S. vi. § 23; vii. § 3; 2 W. MacN. 62; *Lakhi Priya v. Bhairab Chandra*, 5 S. D. 315 (369); *Bhyrobee v. Nubkissen*, 6 S. D. 53 (61); *Alhadmoni v. Gokulmoni*, S. D. of 1852, 563.

(*o*) Mitāksharā, ii. 3; acc. 1 Stra. H. L. 144.

(*p*) 2 W. MacN. 63; *Bishenpiria v. Soogunda*, 1 S. D. 37 (49); *Narainec v. Hirkishor*, ib. 39 (52).

(*q*) *Lalla Joti v. Mt. Durani*, B. L. R. Sup. Vol. 67.

of the stepmother's right (*r*). I am not aware of any decision upon the point in Madras.

Unchastity.

Unchastity of a mother will prevent the estate vesting in her, but will not divest an estate which she has once taken (*s*). But since Act XV of 1856 a mother will not lose her rights as heiress to her son, by reason of a second marriage previous to his death (*t*).

Brothers.

§ 482. BROTHERS.—Next to parents come brothers. There are texts which show that at one time their position in the line of heirs was unsettled, the brother being by some preferred to the parents, while according to others even the grandmother was preferred (*u*). From a religious point of view the claim of the brother would seem to preponderate over that of the father, as he offers exactly the same three oblations as were incumbent on the deceased, while the father receives one and offers two, viz., to his own father and grandfather. But the principle of propinquity in this, as in other cases, turned the scale (*x*).

Whole before
half-blood.

Among brothers, those of the whole blood succeed before those of the half-blood. The Mitāksharâ prefers them on the natural ground of closer relationship, and the Bengal authorities on the ground that the former offer oblations to the ancestors of the deceased both on the male and female side, while the latter offer oblations in the male line only. If there are no brothers of the whole blood, then those of the half-blood are entitled, according to the law of Benares and Bengal, and the Punjâb, and that which prevails in those parts of the Bombay Presidency which follow the Mitāksharâ. The Mayûkha, however, prefers nephews of the whole to brothers of the half-blood, and its authority is paramount in Guzerat, and the island of Bombay (*y*).

(*r*) W. & B. 186. The natural mother would certainly take before the step-mother; *ib.* 161.

(*s*) *Mt. Deokee v. Sookhdeo*, 2 N. W. P., H. C. 361; *ante*, § 470, 471; *Ram-nath Tolapatro v. Durga Sundari*, 4 Calc. 550.

(*t*) *Akora Suth v. Boreani*, 2 B. L. R., A. C. 199; *ante*, § 472.

(*u*) *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, xi. 6, § 4—16, 24.

(*x*) Mitāksharâ, ii. 4; Vivâda Chintâmañi, 295; V. May., iv. 8, § 16; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 5; D. K. S. i. 7.

(*y*) Mitāksharâ, ii. 4, § 5, 6; Vivâda Chintâmañi, 296; Dâya Bhâga, xi. 4, § 9—12; D. K. S. i. 7, § 1—3; 3 Dig. 509, 528; *Neelkisto Deb v. Beerchunder*, 12 M. I. A. 523; *Krishnaji v. Pandurang*, 12 Bomb. 65; V. May., iv. 8, § 16; W. & B. 53, 165; Punjâb Customs, 26—28.

§ 483. Until very lately it was supposed, that the preference of the whole to the half-blood in succession between brothers was subject to an exception in Bengal, where the property was undivided. The point could never arise out of Bengal, for under Mitāksharâ law, where the property is undivided, it passes by survivorship, and not by inheritance. But in Bengal the share of an undivided coparcener does not lapse into the entire property, but passes to his own heirs, of whom, in the absence of nearer relations, his brother is one (§ 243). Jagannâtha quotes a text of Yâma :—"Immovable undivided property shall be the heritage of all the brothers (be their mothers the same or different), but immovable property, when divided, shall on no account be inherited by the sons of the same father only." This he explains by saying, "If any immovable property of divided heirs, common to brothers by different mothers, have remained undivided, being held in coparcenary, the half-brothers shall have equal shares with the rest. But the uterine brother has the sole right to divided property, movable or immovable." (z) And in various cases it was decided that where the brothers were undivided, those of the half-blood were entitled to come in as heirs equally with those of the whole blood (a). If this distinction really existed, it would merely show that the Bengal lawyers did not push the doctrine, that undivided brothers hold their shares in quasi-severalty, to its logical consequences. If brothers of the whole and half-blood are to succeed equally in a system which is governed by the principle of religious efficacy, it can only be by treating the property of the deceased as undivided family property, which is to be dealt with according to the rules of partition, and not as several property, to be dealt with according to the rules of inheritance. Of course, on the former principle the brothers would all share equally, as being equally related to their common father (§ 397). The whole law on the point was, however, lately examined by a Full Bench of the High Court of

Supposed exception in Bengal,

where brothers undivided,

held not to exist.

(z) 3 Dig. 517, 518.

(a) 2 W. MacN. 66; *Tiluck Chunder v. Ram Luckhee*, 2 W. R. 41; *Kylash Chunder v. Gooroo Churn*, 3 W. R. 43; *Shibnarain v. Ram Nidhee*, 9 W. R. 87.

Bengal, and it was decided that no such distinction existed, and that brothers of the half could never take along with brothers of the whole blood, unless the former were undivided, and the latter divided (b).

Undivided
before divided.

Where no preference exists on the ground of blood an undivided brother always takes to the exclusion of a divided brother, whether the former has re-united with the deceased, or has never severed his union (c).

Illegitimate brothers may succeed to each other (§ 467).

Nephews.

§ 484. NEPHEWS.—In default of all brothers, of the whole or half-blood, the sons of brothers, or nephews, succeed. To this, as I have already observed, the Mayûkha appears to make an exception. It allows the sons of a brother of the full blood to succeed before a half-brother, and it appears also to allow the sons of a brother who is dead to share along with surviving brothers (d). But, according to the Benares and Bengal schools, no nephew can succeed as long as there is any brother capable of taking. The rule being universal that, except in the case of a man's own male issue, the nearer sapinda always excludes the more remote (e). But if a brother has once inherited to his brother, and then dies leaving sons, they will take along with the other brothers. Because an interest in the estate had actually vested in their own father, and that interest passes on to them as his heirs. But it must be remembered that the brother must live until the estate has actually vested in him. That is, he must not only survive his own brother, but survive any other persons, such as the widow, daughter, mother, &c., who would take before him (f).

Precedence.

There is the same order of precedence between sons of

(b) *Rajkishore v. Gobind Chunder*, 1 Calc. 27; affirmed *Sheo Soondery v. Pirthee Singh*, 4 I. A. 147.

(c) *Jadubchunder v. Benodbenhari*, 1 Hyde, 214; *Keshub Ram v. Nandkishore*, 11 W. R. 308.

(d) V. May., iv. 8, § 16, 17.

(e) Manu, ix. § 187; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 4, § 7, 8; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, xi. 4, § 22, 23; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 5, § 2, 3; xi. 6, § 1; D. K. S. i. 8, § 1; *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, 295; 3 Dig. 518; 1 W. MacN. 26; *Rooder Chunder v. Sumboo Chunder*, 3 S. D. 106 (142); *Mt. Jymunee v. Ramjoy Chowdhree*, 3 S. D. 289 (385); *Pirthee Singh v. Court of Wards*, 23 W. R. 272.

(f) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 4, § 9; *Burham Deo v. Panchoo Roy*, 2 W. R. 123.

brothers of whole and of half-blood, and between divided and re-united nephews, as prevails between brothers (g).

§ 485. Where nephews succeed as the issue of a brother on whom the property has actually devolved, they of course take his share, that is, they take *per stirpes* with their uncles if any. For instance, suppose at a man's death he leaves two brothers, A. and B., of whom A. has two sons, and immediately afterwards A. dies; then, as the estate had already vested in A., his sons take half, and B. takes the other half: but if he left at his death two nephews by a deceased brother A., and three nephews by another deceased brother B., the five would take in equal shares, or *per capita*, because they take directly to the deceased, just as daughter's sons do, and not through their fathers (h).

They take
per capita.

On the same principle, viz., that nephews take no interest by birth, but merely from the fact of their being the nearest heirs at the time the inheritance falls in, it follows that a nephew can only take, if he is alive when the succession opens. A nephew subsequently born will neither take a share with nephews who have already succeeded, nor will the inheritance taken by others to whom he would have been preferred if then alive, be taken from them for his benefit. But if on any subsequent descent he should happen to be the nearest heir, it will be no impediment to his succession, that he was born after the death of the uncle to whose property he lays claim (i). Of course the adopted son of a brother succeeds exactly as he would have done if he had been the natural-born son of that brother (k).

Nephew has
not a vested
interest.

§ 486. The brother's grandson, or grandnephew, is not mentioned by the Mitāksharā, unless he may be included in the term brother's sons. He is, however, expressly mentioned by the Bengal text books as coming next to the nephew, and is evidently entitled as a sapinda, since he

Grandnephew.

(g) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 6, § 2; D. K. S. i. 8; Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 4, § 26; Mitāksharā, ii. 4, § 7, note; 3 Dig. 524; 2 W. MacN. 72; *Kylash Chunder v. Gooroo Churn*, 3 W. R. 43; affirmed 6 W. R. 93.

(h) W. MacN. 27; 1 Stra. H. L. 145; Mitāksharā, ii. 4, § 7, note; *Brojo Mohun Thakoor v. Gouree Pershad*, 15 W. R. 70; *Gooroo Churn v. Kylash Chunder*, 6 W. R. 93; *Brojo Kishoree v. Streenath Bose*, 9 W. R. 463.

(i) *Bidhoomookhi v. Echamoe*, Sev. 182; *Banymadhob v. Juggodumba*, Sev. 248.

(k) 2 W. MacN. 74.

offers an oblation to the father of the deceased owner. On the same principle the brother's great-grandson is excluded. The same distinction as to whole and half blood prevails as in the case of brothers (*l*). Of course he cannot succeed so long as any nephew is alive, except by special custom (*m*).

Said to be
excluded by
Benares law.

Grandnephew.

Mr. W. MacNaghten states that the brother's grandson is excluded by the authorities of the Benares and Mithilâ school (*n*). But he is included by Varadrâjah, and perhaps by the Mâdhaviya, and it has been decided by the Bengal High Court that under the Mitâksharâ system he is an heir, though it was not decided, and was not necessary to decide, whether he came in next after nephews (*o*). If he succeeds as one of the brother's sons, in the wide meaning usually given to that term, his place would be next after the nephew. That this is his place has been held to be the law in a case from Mithilâ (*p*). And in Western India the grandnephew has been decided to be an heir, though his position is not exactly defined (*q*).

Father's line.

§ 487. On referring to the tables given at § 427 and § 428 it will be seen that, in the first place, the descendants of the owner himself, down to and including his great-grandson and his daughter's son, have been exhausted. The line then ascended a step higher, viz., to his parents, and then descended, exhausting all the male descendants of the father who are also sapinḍas of the owner. Now the sister and sister's son of the owner, are merely the daughter and daughter's son of the owner's father. Similarly his niece and his son are the daughter and daughter's son of his brother. His female first cousin and her son are the daughter and daughter's son of his uncle. His aunt and her son are the daughter and daughter's son of his grand-

Bhinna-gotra
sapinḍas.

(*l*) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 6, § 6, 7; D. K. S. i. 9; 3 Dig. 525. The brother's great-grandson will however, it is said, succeed among the sakulyas in preference to a descendant of equal degree through a female. *Kashee Mohun Roy v. Raj Gobind*, 24 W. R. 229, but see *post*, § 498.

(*m*) 2 W. MacN. 67. In the Punjab, nephews and grandnephews succeed together. Punjab Customs, 12.

(*n*) 1 W. MacN. 28, acc. Smṛiti Chandrikâ, xi. 5.

(*o*) Varadrâjah, 36; Mâdhaviya, § 40; *Kureem Chand v. Oodung Gurain*, 6 W. R. 158; *Mt. Ooriya Kocer v. Rajoo Nye*, 14 W. R. 208.

(*p*) *Sumbhoodutt v. Jhotee Singh*, S. D. of 1855, 382, and so Varadrâjah, 36.

(*q*) W. & E. 195.

father. All these sons, as will be seen, are the *sapiṇḍas* of the owner; but they are not *gotraja sapiṇḍas*. Therefore, upon the principles of all the schools which are not based upon the Dāya Bhāga, none of them can succeed until all the *sapiṇḍas*, *sakulyas*, and *samānodakas* in an unbroken male line have been exhausted. We shall therefore first examine the order of descent as laid down by the Benares and Mithilā schools, which in this, as in most other respects, are identical, and point out the different order of devolution adopted in Bengal and Western India.

§ 488. GRANDFATHERS' AND GREAT-GRANDFATHERS' LINE.— Precedence.
On the exhaustion of the male descendants in the line of the owner's father, a similar course is adopted with regard to the line of his grandfather and great-grandfather. In each case, according to the Mitāksharā, the grandmother and great-grandmother take before the grandfather and great-grandfather. Then come their issue to the third degree inclusive. That is to say, so far as the issue of each ancestor are his *sapiṇḍas*, they are also the *sapiṇḍas* of the owner, with whom they are connected through that ancestor (r). The author of the Smṛiti Chandrikā gives a completely different line of descent. Smṛiti Chandrikā. He makes each line of descent end with the grandson; he makes the son and grandson in each line take before the father, and then brings in the father of one series as the son in the next ascending series (s). This arrangement, however, seems not to have been followed by any other author.

§ 489. SAKULYAS AND SAMĀNODAKAS.—The above order, as Order of their succession. will be seen, exhausts all the *gotraja sapiṇḍas* of the nearer class. Then follow the *sakulyas*, or persons connected by divided oblations, and the *samānodakas*, or kindred connected by libations of water. The former extend to four degrees, both in ascent and descent, beyond the *sapiṇḍas*, and the latter to seven degrees beyond the *sakulyas* (t). Little is to be found as to the order in which they succeed.

(r) Mitāksharā, ii. 5, § 1—6; Mādhaviya, § 41, only includes sons and grandsons, but there can be no reason for excluding the great-grandson. His title was affirmed, *Gobind Proshad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. L. R. 35; W. & B. 195; *Mahoda v. Kuleani*, 1 S. D. 67 (82); V. Darp., 224.

(s) Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 5, § 8—12.

(t) Mitāksharā, ii. 5, § 6.

Precedence of
ascendants or
descendants.

The Bengal writers make those in the descending line take first, and then those in the successive ascending lines with their descendants (*u*). This arrangement follows the analogy of succession among *sapiṇḍas*, where those who offer oblations take first, and then those who participate in them (*x*). In the table of succession given by Prosonno Coomar Tagore in his translation of the *Vivâda Chintâmaṇi*, no mention is made of any descendants beyond the three generations below the owner. He makes the *sakulya* ascendants follow in regular order after the last of the collateral *sapiṇḍas*, and after them the *samânodaka* ascendants. Clearly, however, the *sakulyas* and *samânodakas* in the descending line are entitled equally with the ascendants, if not in priority to them. the *Mitâksharâ* gives no instances of succession for either *sakulyas* or *samânodakas*. After he has exhausted the near *sapiṇḍas* he merely says, "In this manner must be understood the succession of kindred belonging to the same general family and connected by funeral oblations," (*samâ-nagotra sapiṇḍa*) *i.e.*, *sakulyas*. "If there be none such, the succession devolves on kindred connected by libations of water," *i.e.*, *samânodakas* (*y*). But Subodhini in his commentary carries on the enumeration two steps further, on the same principle as Prosonno Coomar Tagore, making the *sakulyas* in the ascending line and their issue follow next after the collateral *sapiṇḍas*. Messrs. West and Bühler suggest two arrangements: either that the fourth, fifth, and sixth, in the owner's own line should take first; next the remoter descendants in the lines of the father, grandfather, &c., successively, and so on; or that those in the different lines should take jointly in the order of nearness, instead of one line excluding the other (*z*). I am not aware of any case in which a conflict between heirs in the ascending and descending lines has arisen. It is obvious that a man could very seldom live so long as to leave a *sakulya*

(*u*) 1 W. MacN. 30; *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 6, § 22, note; Recapitulation, at § 36, note; V. Darp., 305.

(*x*) This is also the order of succession in the list of heirs compiled by Rama Rao, which will be found in Cunningham's Digest.

(*y*) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 5, § 5, 6, note.

(*z*) W. & B. 54, 176. See *fatwah*, 1 Bor. 292.

descendant in existence, and could never leave a *samānodaka* descendant. The question of priority is therefore practically unimportant.

§ 490. BANDHUS.—After all the *samānodakas* are exhausted, the *bandhus* succeed according to Benares and Mithilā law (§ 436). I have already discussed the meaning of this term, and pointed out that none of the enumerations of *bandhus* in the law-books are to be considered exhaustive (a). In the tables annexed to §§ 428, 429, will be found references to the decisions which have affirmed the right as *bandhus* of the various persons there named.

Who are entitled as bandhus.

Among those *bandhus* who are omitted by the Mitāksharā, the sister's son has had the severest struggle for existence, having even run the gauntlet of an adverse decision of the Privy Council. His right has always been recognized under Bengal law, as he is expressly named by the Dāya Bhāga (b). But in the provinces governed by the Mitāksharā (not including Western India) it was supposed that he had no claim, and this view was put forward almost unanimously by text writers, pandits, and Judges (c). The case came on for the decision of the Privy Council in an appeal from the N. W. Provinces, which are governed by the Benares law. There a sister's son sued to set aside an adoption made by the widow of his deceased uncle. The objection was taken that he was not in the line of heirs at all, and as such had no interest, vested or contingent, which would entitle him to maintain the suit. Of course this was the strongest possible form in which the question of his right could arise. It was not a question of precedence, but of absolute exclusion. It went the full length of saying, that if there were no other heir in existence, the estate would escheat rather than pass to him. Yet the doctrine of the inability of the sister's son to inherit was accepted by the

Sister's son.

Right of sister's son under Mitāksharā,

(a) See ante, § 425—430.

(b) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 6, § 8. He has also been recognized as an heir in Lahore. Punjab Customs, 22.

(c) 1 Stra. H. L. 147; Stra. Man. § 341; 2 W. MacN. 85, 87, 88, contra, 2 W. MacN. 91; *Rajchunder Narain v. Goculchund*, 1 S. D. 45 (56); *Jowahir Rahoot v. Mt. Mailassoo*, 1 W. R. 74; *Mt. Guman Kumari v. Srikanth Neogi*, Sev. 460; *Nagalinga v. Vaidilinga Pillay*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 246, where the pandits differed from the Judges; *Kullammal v. Kuppu Pillay*, 1 Mad. H. C. 85; *Mt. Moonea v. Dhurma*, N. W. P. 1866, cited 11 M. I. A. 393.

denied by
Judicial
Committee.

Judicial Committee to this full extent, and the suit was dismissed on the preliminary objection that he had no interest whatever in the subject-matter (*d*). In ordinary cases such a decision would have set the matter at rest for ever. But the case itself was rather an extraordinary one. The plaintiff's counsel chose to make an express admission that his client could not inherit as a *bandhu*, not being mentioned as such in the Mitâksharâ. He asserted that he was really a *gotraja sapinda*. This claim he rested, partly on the authority of the Mayûkha, and partly on the views of Balambhatta and Nanda Pandita, who consider that where the word brothers occurs in the Mitâksharâ it should be interpreted as including sisters (*e*). Consequently, sisters' sons would inherit along with, or immediately after brothers' sons. The Judicial Committee had no difficulty in setting aside the whole of this argument, and as the place which he really occupied as a *bandhu* had been disclaimed for him by his counsel, it followed that no *locus standi* was left to him at all.

Sister's son
recognized as
heir :

This decision was pronounced in 1867, and in 1868 another case arose under Mitâksharâ law, in which also a person not specifically named claimed as a *bandhu*. The relation here was a maternal uncle. The High Court of Bengal held that the Crown would take by escheat in preference to him. The Judicial Committee held that the enumeration of cognates in the Mitâksharâ was not exhaustive, and admitted his claim (*f*). In this case, it will be observed, the uncle took as heir to his sister's son, which is exactly the converse of the former case, where the sister's son claimed as heir to his maternal uncle. But if the uncle is the *bandhu* of his sister's son, this makes it at least probable that the sister's son is the *bandhu* of his uncle. The decision in *Thakoorain Sahiba v. Mohun Lall* was apparently not referred to by the Judicial Committee, and they cited with approbation a later decision of the Bengal High Court, in which the same view had been taken as that enunciated by themselves, and the

(*d*) *Thakoorain Sahiba v. Mohun Lall*, 11 M. I. A. 386.

(*e*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 4, § 1, note ; ante, § 453.

(*f*) *Gridhari Lall v. Government of Bengal*, 12 M. I. A. 448.

right of a sister's son had been admitted in consequence (g), as showing that the point was still open in India.

§ 491. In this state of the authorities, the case of a sister's son came before the Full Bench of the High Court of Bengal, upon a reference to them made in regard to the case quoted by the Judicial Committee. His right was affirmed in a most elaborate judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Mitter, and assented to by the other Judges. The judgment was written before the decision of the Privy Council in *Gridhari Lall v. Government of Bengal* had reached India, but proceeded on exactly the same grounds. He showed that the specific enumeration of *bandhus* in the *Mitāksharâ* was not exhaustive but illustrative only, and that the sister's son not only came within the definition of a *bandhu* as laid down by *Vijñaneśvara*, but was really nearer than any of those who were expressly named. The adverse decision of the Privy Council on the appeal from the N. W. Provinces was disposed of, by the remark that it had really proceeded upon a mere admission of counsel which could not be binding in any other case (h). This decision was again followed by the High Court of Madras as settling the law in that Presidency (i).

by Full Bench
of Bengal ;

and in Madras.

§ 492. It is a very remarkable thing, that in 1871 the very same question as to the right of a sister's son was again raised before the Judicial Committee in an appeal from the N. W. Provinces, and the very same argument was addressed to them on his behalf as that which they had already set aside in 1867. It was not necessary to decide the point, as it had not been taken in the Indian Courts, and the facts as to the relationship were not admitted. But their Lordships treated the claim as wholly an open question, though they seem to think that the balance of authority was against its validity (k). No reference was made to their own decisions

Treated as
still open by
Judicial
Committee.

(g) *Amrita Kumari Debi v. Lakhinarayan Chuckerbutty*. This is the case next cited, where the decision to which the Judicial Committee had referred, was confirmed on a reference made to the Full Bench.

(h) *Amrita Kumari Debi v. Lakhinarayan Chuckerbutty*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 28.

(i) *Chelakani Tirupati v. Rajah Suraneni*, 6 Mad. H. C. 273. His right has always been recognized in Western India, W. & B. 202, 205, but the son of the step-sister is said not to take where there is a son of a full sister, *ib.* 205. This would naturally be so on principles of consanguinity. In Bengal, where religious efficacy is considered, sons of sisters of whole and half blood take together, each being of equal merit. 2 W. MacN. 86; D. K. S. i. 10, § 1.

(k) *Koor Goolab Singh v. Rao Kurun Singh*, 14 M. I. A. 176, 195.

in 1867 and 1868, nor does their attention appear to have been called to the Full Bench ruling on the point in Bengal.

On the whole, however, it may probably be considered that the rights of the sister's son, and of all others similarly situated, are now settled beyond dispute.

Granduncle's
daughter's son.

§ 493. The right of the granduncle's daughter's son has also been discussed in Madras, and decided against (*l*). But this decision rested upon the supposition, that as he was not named by the *Mitâksharâ*, he was excluded. The Court admitted that on general principles he would inherit, but pointed out that he stood on exactly the same footing as the sister's son, who at the date of the decision was supposed not to be in the line of heirs. But as the right of the latter is now established, the reasoning put forward by the Judges for shutting out the son of the granduncle's daughter, would apply directly in favour of letting him in.

Precedence rests
on affinity under
the *Mitâksharâ*.

§ 494. The order of succession among *bandhus* under *Mitâksharâ* law is very obscure. Nothing is to be found upon the subject either among text-writers or in precedents, and the principle upon which any case is to be decided is far from clear. If the text of the *Mitâksharâ* in which the *bandhus* are enumerated is to be taken as indicating the order of succession, it will be seen that proximity, and not religious efficacy, is the ground of preference; the first of the three classes contains the man's own first cousins, the second contains his father's first cousins, and the third contains his mother's first cousins (§ 437). This is corroborated by the next verse (*m*), where the author says, "By reason of near affinity, the cognate kindred of the deceased are his successors in the first instance, on failure of them the father's cognate kindred, or if there be none, the mother's cognate kindred. This must be understood to be the order of succession here intended." The preference of the father's kindred to that of the mother, is in accordance with the general preference of the male line to the female line (§ 436).

Arrangement
under Bengal
law.

§ 495. BENGAL LAW.—The radical difference between the system of the *Dâya Bhâga* and of the *Mitâksharâ* is, that

(*l*) *Kissen Lalla v. Javalla Prasad*, 3 Mad. H. C. 346.

(*m*) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 6, § 2.

the former allows the *bandhus*, that is the *bhinna-gotra sapindas*, to come in along with, instead of after, the *gotraja sapindas* (§ 432), the principle of religious efficacy being the sole test applied in deciding between rival claimants. Upon examining the application of this principle, it will be seen in the first place, that all the *bandhus ex parte paternâ* come in before any of those *ex parte maternâ*. The reason is that the former present oblations to paternal ancestors, which are of higher efficacy than those presented by the latter to maternal ancestors (*n*). As regards the position *inter se* of the *bandhus ex parte paternâ*, it will be seen by a reference to the table (§ 428) that every one of them is a daughter's son in the branch where he occurs. Only three of these are mentioned in the *Dâya Bhâga*—viz., the sons of the daughters of the father, the grandfather, and the great-grandfather respectively; and these are ranked immediately after the male issue of those ancestors, that is, they come in before the males of the branch next above them. Just as the daughter's son of the owner comes in before his father, brothers, nephews, and grandnephews (*o*). The *Dâya-krahma-sangraha* introduces a new series of *bandhus*, viz., those who occupy the position of sons of the nieces of the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. It follows the *Dâya Bhâga* in making the daughter's son succeed the male issue of each branch, and places the niece's sons immediately after the daughter's son (*p*). It does not mention the sons of the grandniece in each branch, but their title is exactly of a similar nature, and has been

Order of precedence in Bengal.

(*n*) *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 6, § 12, 20; D. K. S., i, 10, § 14; 3 Dig. 529; *ante*, § 432, rule 4.

(*o*) *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 6, § 8—12; 3 Dig. 528; V. Darp., 224. Accordingly the sister's son has been held to take before paternal uncles (2 W. MacN. 84); *Sumbochunder v. Gunga Churn*, 6 S. D. 234 (291), and their issue (1 W. MacN., 28); *Rajchunder Narain v. Gokulchunder*, 1 S. D. 43 (56); 2 W. MacN. 85, 87; *Karuna Mai v. Jai Chundra*, 5 S. D. 46 (50); *Kishen Lochan v. Tarini Dasi*, ib. 55 (66); *Lakhi Priya v. Bhairab Chandra*, ib. 315 (369); 1 W. & B. 159; *Duneshwur v. Deoshunker*, Morris Pt. II. 63; *Brojo Kishoren v. Sreenath Bose*, (9 W. R. 463). *A fortiori* before the issue of the great-grandfather (2 W. MacN. 89, 90). But he takes after the son of a half-brother (2 W. MacN. 68, 82); and he will take equally whether he is alive at the death of the last male holder, or of any female who takes by inheritance from such male (*Seeta Ram Gossain v. Fakeer Chand*, 15 W. R. 433.)

(*p*) D. K. S. i. 10, §§ 1, 2; 8, 9; 12, 13.

Precedence
under Bengal
system.

affirmed to exist (*q*). Now this order of succession would be the natural one if proximity alone was regarded, the agnates in each branch being preferred to the cognates, but the cognates in each branch being preferred to the agnates in the more distant branch. It would also be the proper course if the mere number of oblations were regarded. The daughter's son in each line presents exactly the same number of oblations as the son in the same line, and presents them to the same persons. So the sons of the niece and of the grandniece present the same number of oblations, and to the same persons, as the nephew and grandnephew. Each of these presents a greater number of oblations than the son in the line above him. But then comes in the principle, that oblations presented to paternal ancestors are more efficacious than those presented to maternal ancestors (*r*). If this principle goes to the extent, that a man who presents a greater number of oblations to persons who are his maternal ancestors, is inferior to one who presents a lesser number to persons who are his paternal ancestors, then the principle is undoubtedly disregarded both by the Dâya Bhâga and the Dâya-krahma-sangraha. If, however, it only goes to this extent, that where the number is equal, those who present offerings to paternal ancestors are preferred to those who present them to maternal ancestors, then the whole course of descent is logical and consistent.

Son of a niece.

§ 496. This question arose very lately in Bengal under the following circumstances. In 1864 the High Court had held that the son of a brother's daughter was not an heir at all, and that the passage in the Dâya-krahma-sangraha which stated that he was an heir was an interpolation (*s*). In 1870 this decision was reversed by the Full Bench, in an elaborate judgment by Mr. Justice Mitter. His judgment was based entirely upon general considerations as to the nature of the relationship of *bandhus*, and the grounds upon which they were entitled. The decision did not refer to, still less affirm the genuineness of the disputed text of the Dâya-krahma-

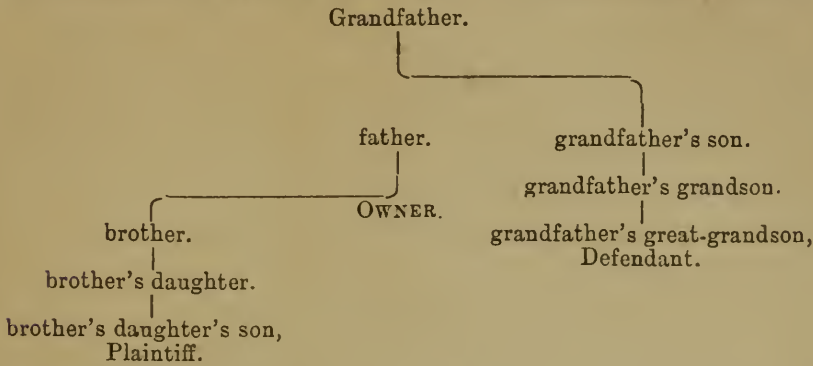
(*q*) *Kashee Mohun v. Raj Gobind Chuckerbutty*, 24 W. R. 229.

(*r*) 3 Dig. 530; *per Mitter, J., Guru Gobind v. Anand Lal*, 5 B. L. R. at p. 39.

(*s*) *Gobindo Hureekar v. Woomes Chunder*, W. R. Sp. Number 176, referring to D. K. S., i, 10, § 2.

sangraha (t). No question was then raised as to the position which such a *bandhu* would take in the line of heirs. Finally, this last question arose in 1874. The relationship of the conflicting parties is shown in the annexed pedigree.

Postponed to distant agnate.



The plaintiff was son of the owner's niece. The defendants were what we should call first cousins once removed, in the male line. Both the Lower Courts decided in favour of the plaintiff. It is evident that he offered oblations to the owner and his father, while the defendant only offered to the grandfather. On appeal, however, this decision was reversed. The Court admitted the plaintiff's right as a *bandhu*, but held that he must come in after the defendant, on the ground that they who offer to maternal ancestors, are inferior in religious efficacy to those who offer a lesser number of cakes to paternal ancestors. The text of the *Dâya-krahma-sangraha*, which makes him succeed after the son of the father's daughter, and before the grandfather, was treated, on the authority of the case in 1864, as being of too doubtful authenticity to weigh against the infringement of first principles which it was supposed to contain (u).

§ 497. It may be remarked upon this decision, that if § 2 of the *Dâya-krahma-sangraha*, ch. i., s. 10, is to be rejected as spurious, §§ 9 and 13 must go with it, for all three lay down exactly the same rule, and rest upon the same principle. If this principle is erroneous, it is difficult to see how

Decision discussed.

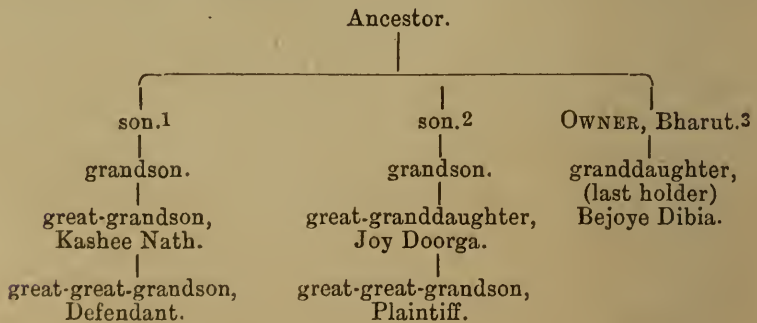
(t) *Guru Gobind v. Anand Lal*, 5 B. L. R. 15. It may be observed that the decision in the over-ruled case had been obtained by the argument of Mr. Justice Mitter himself when at the bar. This may account for the fact that no notice was taken of the D. K. S. in the over-ruling judgment.

(u) *Gobind Proshad v. Mohesh Chunder*, 15 B. L. R. 35; *Oodoychurn Mitter's* case, 4 Calc. 411, followed.

the Dâya Bhâga (xi. 6, § 8—12) can be maintained, for it places the daughter's son of the branches above the owner, before the males of the next higher branch. The Court deals with this by saying, that the special reason given by Jîmûta Vâhana for that arrangement does not apply to the others. The special reason is, that "his father's or grandfather's daughter's son, like his own daughter's son, transports his manes over the abyss by offering oblations of which he may partake." But the brother's daughter's son offers oblations of exactly the same character. The only remaining supposition is, that the daughter's sons of the direct lineal ancestors have an efficacy of a different character from that possessed by the daughter's sons of the collateral branches. If so the Dâya-krahma-sangraha would be wrong, the Dâya Bhâga and the High Court of Bengal right. The arrangement would then be, that the daughter's sons of collaterals should come in one after the other, at the end of the nearer sapinḍas, and before the sakulyas.

Sakulya
preferred to a
bandhu.

§ 498. The principle of the above decision was carried out in a later case, to the extent of preferring a male, who was not a sapinḍa at all, to an undoubted bandhu. The last male holder of the property in dispute, named Bharut, was the third son of the common ancestor. He was succeeded by his daughter, on whose death the conflict arose between plaintiff and defendant. Their relationship to him appears in the accompanying pedigree. It was admitted that defendant



was only a sakulya. On the other hand, the plaintiff offered cakes to his three maternal ancestors, one of whom was the common ancestor. Of course the question would have been exactly the same if the last holder had been the ancestor

himself. It certainly does seem anomalous, that where two claimants are equally distant, a case can arise, in which the one who claims through a female is actually preferred to one who claims through an unbroken line of males. Under Mitāksharâ law, of course, no such preference could ever be asserted. Yet, upon the ground of religious efficacy, it seems clear that on Bengal principles the plaintiff had a superiority over the defendant, unless it can be laid down, that a divided oblation offered to a paternal ancestor is more meritorious than an undivided oblation offered to a maternal ancestor. The ground upon which the Court proceeded was as follows. "It is quite clear that going back a generation to the time when Kashee Nath represented one generation and Joy Doorga the other, Kashee Nath was the preferential heir. He alone could have performed the *pârbbana Çrâddha*, and not Joy Doorga. Consequently it seems to us that the son of Kashee Nath would have a necessarily preferential right over, and would exclude the son of Joy Doorga. The ceremony of the *pârbbana Çrâddha* is one that cannot remain in abeyance, and is one that cannot be performed by a female. It has been described as the most important of the ceremonies prescribed by the Hindu religion. The inability of Joy Doorga to perform it, and the performance of it by Kashee Nath during his lifetime, carried with it the right to inherit as the reward of benefits conferred on the deceased. And that right extends in the succeeding generation to giving preference to the son of Kashee Nath as heir, and nearer to Bharut than the son of Joy Doorga. This view is confirmed by the provisions of chap. xi. of the *Dâya Bhâga*, which, as pointed out by Mr. Justice Mitter (x), has as its most prominent characteristic, the studious exclusion of female relatives generally. And the whole tendency of the treatises on the subject is, as we understand them, directed to the preference of those who lineally descend from males as heirs, to the postponement of those who derive their right to succession through a female member of the family. The break in the capacity

*Kashee Mohun
v. Raj Gobind*

(x) In his judgment, 5 B. L. R. 34.

to perform the religious ceremonies, resulting from the intervention of a daughter in the direct line of descent, seems to us to give the preference to the line in which male issue has continued unbroken, and the male issue of a brother, traced through sonship, is endued with superior efficacy as regards oblations to the issue of a brother through a daughter (y)."

Discussed.

§ 499. With great respect to the learned Judges, it may be doubted whether there is not a flaw in this reasoning. It is quite clear that Kashee Nath had a better title than either Joy Doorga or her son. If the inheritance had fallen in during his life, he would have swept it away, and there the matter would have ended. But it is equally clear that no right whatever vested in him during the life of the last holder, and therefore he could transmit none to his son (z). At the death of Bijoye Dibia, the rival claimants had to be judged each on their merits. The son of Kashee Nath did not take through his father, nor the son of Joy Doorga through his mother; that is to say, their rights did not depend upon the relative rights which those persons would have had, if they had both survived Bijoye. The question was, as the Judges correctly state it, which of them was endued with superior efficacy as regards oblations? Now the peculiarity of Hindu ceremonial law is, that an heir in the female line offers to three maternal ancestors, excluding his mother, while an heir in the male line offers to three paternal ancestors, including his father. Consequently the former is able to offer an undivided oblation to an ancestor one degree more remote from himself than the latter can. It is admitted that oblations offered to a maternal ancestor are, to a certain extent, less efficacious than those offered to a paternal ancestor. But the question is, whether a divided oblation offered to a paternal ancestor confers on him greater religious benefit, than an undivided oblation offered to the same person as a maternal ancestor. If so, all the *sakulyas* would take before any *bandhu*. That is the law of the Mitâksharâ,

Preference of a
sakulya to a
bandhu.

(y) *Kashee Mohun Roy v. Raj Gobind Chuckerbutty*, 24 W. R. 229.

(z) See *ante*, § 484, 485.

but, except for the case under discussion, it would appear not to be the law of the Dâya Bhâga (a).

§ 500. Jîmûta Vâhana hardly notices the *bandhus ex parte maternâ*, merely alluding to them as “the maternal uncle and the rest,” who come in “on failure of any lineal descendant of the paternal great-grandfather, down to the daughter’s son.” He seems to attempt to reconcile his order of succession with that of Yājñavalkya, by assuming that the term *bandhu*, as used by the latter, only referred to those on the mother’s side (b). Çrikriṣṇa, however, sets out their order very fully, adopting the same principle as he had done in regard to the other sapinḍas. He gives the property first to the mother’s father, and his issue, that is the maternal uncle, his son, and grandson, then to the daughter’s son of the mother’s father, then to the line of the mother’s grandfather, and great-grandfather, in similar manner, and, on failure of all these, to the *sakulyas* and *samânodakas* (c). These, as already stated, take first in the descending line, and then in the ascending (d).

Bandhus ex
parte maternâ.

§ 501. BOMBAY LAW.—The distinctive feature of the law which prevails in Western India, is the laxity with which it admits females to the succession. The doctrine of Baudhâyana, which asserts the general incapacity of women for inheritance, and its corollary, that women can only inherit under a special text, appear never to have been accepted by the Western lawyers. They take the word *sapinḍa* in the widest sense, as importing mere affinity, and without the limitation of the Mitâksharâ, that female sapinḍas can only inherit when they are also *gotrajas*, that is, persons who continue in the family to which they claim as heirs (e). The most prominent instance of this doctrine is the introduction of the sister into the line of succession. She is brought in by the Mayûkha after the paternal grandmother,

Admission of
females.

Sister.

(a) See *Deyanath Roy v. Muthoor Nath*, 6 S. D. 27 (30), where the son of the maternal aunt of the deceased was held entitled, in preference to any lineal descendant from a common ancestor beyond the third degree. Such a relation is obviously inferior in religious efficacy to the son of the nephew’s daughter.

(b) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 6, § 12—14.

(c) D. K. S. i. 10, § 14—21.

(d) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 6, § 22; D. K. S. i. 10, 22—25.

(e) W. & B. 177—188.

Sister.

and before the paternal grandfather, under that serviceable text of Manu, "To the nearest *sapiṇḍa* (male or female) after him in the third degree the inheritance next belongs" (*f*). Nīlakaṇṭha applies this text by saying, "In case of the non-existence of that (the paternal grandmother) the sister (takes) according to the *dictum* of Manu, that 'whoever is the nearest *sapiṇḍa* his should be the property'; and according to the text of Vṛihaspati, that where there are many *jñāti*, *sakulyas*, and *bandhavas*, among them whoever is the nearest, he should take the property of the childless; she the sister also being born in the brother's *gotra*, and so there being no difference of *gotra* (the state of being born in the *gotra*). But (says an objector) there is no *sagotrata* (state of being in the same *gotra*). True, but neither is that stated here as a reason for taking property" (*g*). And not only full sisters, but stepsisters, inherit (*h*). Another instance is the rule which allows widows of persons who would have been heirs to inherit immediately after their husbands. The other schools of law never allow a widow, *as such*, to inherit to any one but her own husband (*i*). So daughters of descendants and collaterals within six degrees inherit; for instance, both a brother's daughter, and a sister's daughter (*j*). Also "descendants of a person's own daughters, and of those persons expressly mentioned within four degrees of such persons respectively, *e.g.*, a granddaughter's grandson, but not the great-grandson, since *sapiṇḍa* relationship through females is restricted to four degrees" (*k*). I can offer no opinion whatever as to the order in which such persons take. Messrs. West and Bühler suggest that they would come in after the nine *bandhus* who are expressly named in the Mitāksharâ, on the principle stated by the Mayûkha, that incidental persons are placed last, and that, as between

Widows.

Daughters.

Their precedence.

(*f*) Manu, ix. § 187.

(*g*) V. May., iv. 8, § 19; translated 2 Bomb. L. R. 421, *ante*, § 454.

(*h*) W. & B. 186.

(*i*) W. & B. 55, 177, 195—199; *Lakshmibai v. Jayram*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 152; *Lalloobhai v. Mankuverbai*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 388. This case is now under appeal to the P. C.; *ante*, § 452.

(*j*) 1 W. & B. 183—185; 59, 207, 208.

(*k*) W. & B. *Introd.* 59.

each other, nearness of kin to the deceased is the only guide (*l*).

Tables of descent, professing to give all possible heirs in the order of succession, for the different provinces, will be found in the works referred to below (*m*). I have not attempted to compile any such list. I doubt the possibility of preparing one that should be at once exhaustive and accurate. It would certainly be beyond my powers. Wherever a conflict arises between any two specific claimants, I believe that the principles already stated, will, in general, be sufficient to decide their priority.

Tables of
descent.

§ 502. Before passing from this part of the subject, it may be well to refer to the rare case of succession after a reunion. Manu, after speaking of a second partition after a reunion, says, "Should the eldest or youngest of several brothers be deprived of his share (by a civil death on his entrance into the fourth order), or should any one of them die, his (vested interest in a) share shall not wholly be lost. But (if he leave neither son nor wife, nor daughter, nor father, nor mother), his uterine brothers and sisters, and such brothers as were reunited after a separation, shall assemble, and divide his share equally (*n*).'' Now it will be remembered that Manu requires a share to be given to a sister on a partition (§ 401), but nowhere refers to her as an heir. It is probable, therefore, that this text refers to a case where a partition had already commenced, but had not been concluded, and merely directs that in such a case his share shall not pass by inheritance, but shall be thrown into the property, and divided again. The sisters would then be entitled to their shares. This seems the more probable, as no allusion is made to the sister in the passage of Yājñavalkya, which treats of the descent of the share of a reunited coparcener. That passage, as translated by Mr.

Succession after
a reunion.

(*l*) W. & B. 203; V. May., iv. 8, § 18.

(*m*) V. Darp., 266—271; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 6, § 36; Smṛiti Chandrikā, p. 221; Stra. Man. § 315; Cunningham's Digest, § 249; Prosonno Coomar Tagore's Vivāda Chintāmani.

(*n*) Manu, ix. § 210—212. The words in brackets are the gloss of Kallūka Bhaṭṭa. See also a similar text by Vṛihaspati, 3 Dig. 476, where there is a various reading of *daughter* for sister. V. May., iv. 9, § 25; Smṛiti Chandrikā, xii. § 25; Mādhaviya, § 47; Varadrājah, 55.

Succession after
a reunion.

Whole and half-
blood.

After reunion
under Benares
law.

Colebrooke (o), is as follows:—"A reunited (brother) shall keep the share of his reunited (co-heir) who is deceased, or shall deliver it to (a son subsequently) born. But an uterine (or whole) brother shall thus retain or deliver the allotment of his uterine relation. A half-brother, being again associated, may take the succession; not a half-brother, though not reunited; but one united (by blood, though not by coparcenary) may obtain the property, and not (exclusively) the son of a different mother." The meaning of this unusually obscure passage is, that if a reunited coparcener dies, leaving issue actually born, or then in the womb, such issue takes his share. If however he only leaves brothers, there may have been a reunion of all the brothers, or only of the uterine brothers, or only of the half-brothers. In such events the rule already stated (§ 482), that the whole is preferred to the half-blood, remains in force. But reunion gives the reunited brother a claim which is not possessed by the divided brother. Therefore where two brothers are in the same position as to whole or half-blood, the reunited brother has a preference over the divided brother. But where they are in a different position, the one who is inferior in blood, if reunited, is raised to a level with the one who is superior in blood, but divided. The result therefore is, if all the surviving brothers are divided, or if all are reunited, those of the whole blood take before the half-blood. If some are divided, and some are reunited, the reunited brothers take to the exclusion of the divided brothers, provided they are both of equal merits as to blood. Where the reunited brothers are of the half-blood, and the divided brothers are of the whole blood, both take equally. Of course, if the cases were reversed, the reunited brothers of the whole blood would take before divided brothers of the half-blood (p).

§ 503. The above rule of succession is perfectly clear and logical on the principles of the Bengal school. But on the

(o) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 138, 139; Mitāksharā, ii. 9.

(p) V. May., iv. 9, § 5—13; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 308; V. Darp., 204; Mitāksharā, ii. 9, § 4—13; Dāya Bhāga, xi. 5, § 13—39; D. K. S. i. 7, § 3—6, v. § 8, 9; 3 Dig. 507—517, 554; *Raj Kishore v. Gobind Chunder*, 1 Cal. 27; F. MacN. 110; *Tarachund v. Pulum Lochun*, 5 W. R. 249; *Gopal Chunder v. Kenaram*, 7 W. R. 35; *Sham Narain v. Court of Wards*, 20 W. R. 197.

principles of the Benares school one would suppose, that the property of reunited members stood on exactly the same footing as that of members who had always been undivided. In that case, upon the death of any one member of the undivided family, his share would pass by survivorship to the remaining members, and could by no possibility get into the hands of any divided member, so long as there were undivided members in existence. The difficulty was seen by the author of the *Smṛiti Chandrikā*. His explanation is, in substance, that there is a difference between the interest in property held by an originally undivided member, and by one who has reunited after partition. In the former case there has been no ascertainment of his share. In the latter case his share has been ascertained, and continues so ascertained after reunion. The reunion only destroys the exclusive right which he acquired by partition in the property which had fallen to his share (*q*). That is, as I understand him, that he was a joint tenant before partition, a sole tenant after partition, a tenant in common after reunion. After reunion his share is held in quasi-severalty, and at his death passes by descent, and not by survivorship, in the same manner as that of an undivided brother in Bengal.

After reunion
under Benares
law.

Nothing is said in the books as to the very probable case of a reunited member dying without issue, but leaving heirs, such as a widow, daughter, &c., who would take before brothers. If the explanation just given is correct, they would take the whole property, even under *Mitāksharā* law, as they certainly would do under the law of Bengal.

§ 504. STRANGERS.—Where there are no relations of the deceased (*r*), the preceptor, or, on failure of him, the pupil, the fellow-student, or a learned and venerable priest, should take the property of a Brāhman, or, in default of such a one, any Brāhman (*s*). The *Dāya Bhāga* interposes persons bearing the same family name between the fellow-student and the priest (*t*). In case of traders who die in a foreign

Ultior heirs.

Strangers.

(*q*) *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, xii. § 9.

(*r*) The word here translated relations is *bandhus*, Goldstücker, 26.

(*s*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 7, § 1—4. See V. Darp., 307.

(*t*) *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 6, § 26.

King.

country, leaving no heirs of their own family, the fellow trader is authorised to take (*u*). Finally, in default of all these, the king takes by escheat, except the property of a Brâhman, which it is said can never fall to the Crown (*y*).

Escheat.

§ 505. I know of no instance in which a claim has ever been set up by a preceptor, or pupil, to the property of a person dying without heirs, and it is clear that the claims of all the other possible successors above named are too indefinite to be maintained. The direction that the king can never take the estate of a Brâhman, has also been overthrown in the only case in which the exemption was set up (*z*). There the Crown claimed by escheat as against the alienee of a Brâhman widow, whose husband had left no heirs. It was held that the claim must prevail, notwithstanding the rule relied on; either on the ground, that the rule itself assumed that the king must take the estate for a time, in order to pass it on to a Brâhman; or on the ground, that where the last owner died without heirs, there ceased to be any personal law governing the case of Brâhmans, which could settle the further devolution of the property. In the former case the title of the Crown to hold was complete, subject only to the question whether the Crown held absolutely, or in trust. In the latter case, in the absence of any personal law, the general prerogative of the Crown as to heirless property must prevail.

Its effect.

Where the Crown claims by escheat, it must make out affirmatively that there are no heirs (*a*). When it has taken, its title prevails against all unauthorised alienations by the last owner, as for instance by a widow, but is subject to any trust or charge properly created (*b*).

Escheat is only to Crown.

The principle of escheat does not apply in favour of Zemindars who have carved out a subordinate, but absolute and alienable interest, from their own estate. On failure of

(*u*) See a passage in the *Mitâksharâ*, not translated by Mr. Colebrooke, cited 12 M. I. A. 457, 465.

(*y*) *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 6, § 27; *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 7, § 5, 6.

(*z*) *Collector of Masulipatam v. Cavalry Venkata Narainapah*, 8 M. I. A. 500.

(*a*) *Gridhari Lall v. Government of Bengal*, 12 M. I. A. 448.

(*b*) *Collector of Masulipatam v. C. V. Narainapah*, 8 M. I. A. 500, 529; 11 M. I. A. 619.

heirs of the subordinate holder, the estate will pass to the Crown, and will not revert to the Zemindar (c).

§ 506. Special rules are also propounded for succession to the property of a hermit, an ascetic, or a professed student (d). Practically, however, the case seldom arises. When a hermit has any property which is not of secular origin, he generally holds it as the head of some Mutt or religious endowment, and succession to such property is regulated by the special custom of the foundation (§ 364). No one can come under the above heads, for the purpose of introducing a new rule of inheritance, unless he has absolutely retired from all earthly interests, and, in fact, become dead to the world. In such a case all property then vested in him passes to his legal heirs, who succeed to it at once. If his retirement is of a less complete character, the mere fact that he has assumed a religious title, and has even entered into a monastery, will not divest him of his property, or prevent his secular heirs from succeeding to any secular property which may have remained in his possession (e).

Property of
ascetic

(c) *Sonet Kowar v. Mirza Himmur*, 3 I. A. 92.

(d) *Yājñavalkya*, ii. 137; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 8; *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 6, § 35, 36; 2 *Stra. H. L.* 248; *W. & B.* 208, 253; 3 *Dig.* 546; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, xi. 7; *V. Darp.*, 312; See *Khuggender v. Sharupgir*, 4 *Calc.* 543.

(e) 2 *W. MacN.* 101; *Mohunt Mudhoobun v. Huri Kishen*, S. D. of 1852, 1089; *Ameena Khatoon v. Radhabinode*, S. D. of 1856, 596; *Khoderam v. Rookhinee*, 15 *W. R.* 197; *Jagannath v. Bidyanand*, 1 *B. L. R.*, A. C. 114; *Dukharam Bharti v. Luchmun Bharti*, 4 *Calc.* 954.

CHAPTER XIX.

EXCLUSION FROM INHERITANCE.

Principle of
exclusion.

§ 507. THE Brāhmanical theory of wealth is, that it is conferred for the sake of defraying the expense of sacrifices (*a*). The theory of inheritance is, that it descends upon the heir to enable him to rescue the deceased from eternal misery. Consequently one who is unable or unwilling to perform the necessary sacrifices is incapable of inheriting (*b*). The son who neglects the duty of redeeming his father, is compared by Vrihaspati to a cow, which neither affords milk nor becomes pregnant. He has no claim to the paternal estate. It must devolve on those learned priests who offer the funeral cake to the deceased (*c*). Such a theory was likely to meet with a good deal of extension from the priestly lawyers. Accordingly we find that not only congenital defects, such as impotence, idiocy, being born blind, deaf or dumb, without a limb or a sense, were grounds of exclusion, but the same penalty befel those who were afflicted with madness, or an obstinate or agonising disease (*d*), or who were addicted to vice (*e*), or who were hypocrites or impostors (*f*), or even persons who might be held not to possess sacred knowledge, or courage, or industry, or devotion, or liberality, or who failed to observe immemorial good customs (*g*). Naturally, degradation from caste, the highest penalty for sin, was itself accompanied with forfeiture of inheritance (*h*).

(*a*) 3 Dig. 317.

(*b*) 3 Dig. 298; Vivāda Chintāmañi, 243; Ind. Wisd. 159, 275, 281.

(*c*) 3 Dig. 301.

(*d*) 3 Dig. 303, 309.

(*e*) 3 Dig. 299.

(*f*) 3 Dig. 304. The same phrase however is elsewhere translated as having assumed the garb or profession of a beggar or ascetic.

(*g*) 3 Dig. 301.

(*h*) 3 Dig. 300. See generally, Mitāksharā, ii. 10; V. May., iv. 11; Dāya Bhāga, v; D. K. S. iii.; V. Darp., 995.

§ 508. Of course such a system could never have been practically enforced, even if the Brâhmans had possessed all the power which they claimed. The substantial part of it probably consisted in the parallel theory of expiation, which at once rendered it profitable to the priestly class, and endurable by the rest of the community. Just as the Romish Church created an elaborate system of restraints on marriage, and then proceeded straightway to dispense with them for a consideration. Various maladies were noted as the specific penalties of sins committed in the present or in former states of existence, and thus brought within the sphere of religious discipline (*i*). Minute classifications of crime and disease were framed, and the penalties accruing in respect of some of these were expiable, wholly or in part, whereas in respect of others, the sin could be removed, but not the forfeiture of right resulting from it (*j*). I imagine that secular Courts could only take notice of the last-named grounds of disability. If it appeared that a particular sort of disability was in fact removable by penance, a Judge could hardly be called on to decide whether the penance had been properly performed, and if not, why not (*k*). The result seems to be that the causes entailing civil disability are reduced to those originally stated by Manu (*l*). “Eunuchs and outcasts, persons born blind or deaf, the dumb, and such as have lost the use of a limb, are excluded from heritage.” To this enumeration Yâjñavalkya adds, “And a person afflicted with an incurable disease” (*m*), which again seems now to be limited to the worst form of leprosy.

Mitigated by
expiation.

§ 509. Outcasts are now relieved by Act XXI of 1850. “So much of any law or usage now in force within the ter-

(*i*) 3 Dig., 313, 314; Manu, xi. § 48—53.

(*j*) V. Darp., 999 *et seq.*, 1005; 1 Stra. H. L. 155; *Sheo Nath Rai v. Mt. Dayamyee*, 2 S. D. 103 (137); Manu, xi. § 47, 54, 183—183, 240, 248, &c., from which it appears that every sin however great was expiable.

(*k*) Acc. V. Darp., 1007, where it is said that in cases where the disability is removable by penance, persons are seen to take the inheritance even without performing the penance. 1 Stra. H. L. 159. But see *Bhola Nath v. Mt. Sabitra*, 6 S. D. 62 (71); *Bhoobunessuree v. Gouree Doss*, 11 W. R. 535, where a claim to inheritance was dismissed on the ground of disabilities which appear to have been expiable, but were not in fact expiated.

(*l*) Manu, ix. § 201.

(*m*) Mitâksharâ, ii. 10, § 1.

Loss of caste
now relieved.

ritories subject to the government of the E. I. Co. as inflicts on any person forfeiture of rights or property, or may be held in any way to impair or affect any right of inheritance, by reason of his or her renouncing, or having been excluded from the communion of any religion, or being deprived of caste, shall cease to be enforced as law." The effect of this section is that degradation or exclusion of caste, from whatever cause it may arise, is absolutely immaterial in all cases where, except for the Act, it would have debarred a person from enforcing or exercising a right (*n*). But where there are circumstances which, independent of all considerations of caste, create a disability under Hindu law, the fact that degradation from caste follows upon the disability, leaves it just where it was before. The disability is not removed, because the degradation is inoperative. For instance, the incontinence of a Hindu widow is a bar to her claiming the estate of her husband (*o*). If her incontinence is of a very aggravated character—as, for instance, the union of a Brâhmaṇî with a Çûdra man, it would involve loss of caste. But that circumstance would not be an element in deciding whether her rights of inheritance were lost. It would not enhance the effect of her unchastity. Nor would the fact that the loss of caste was cured by Act XXI of 1850 remove the effect of the antecedent incontinence (*p*).

What defects
must be con-
genital.

Mental infirmity

§ 510. Where it is sought to exclude an heir on the ground that he is blind, deaf or dumb, it is necessary to show that these defects are incurable and congenital (*q*). As to mental infirmity, it has been held in Madras, that the degree of incapacity which amounts to idiocy is not utter mental darkness. It is sufficient if the person is, and has

(*n*) *Bhujjun Lall v. Gya Pershad*, 2 N. W. P. 446; *Honamma v. Timmanna Bhat*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 559. Where a Hindu who had become a Mahummedan in 1839 sued for his inheritance subsequent to 1850, the Madras Sudder Court rejected his claim, holding that the Act XXI of 1850 was not retrospective (*Naugammah v. Kareebasappah*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 250.) It is not likely that any case will now arise in which the soundness of this decision can be tested.

(*o*) *Ante*, § 470.

(*p*) *Strimati Matangini Debi v. Strimati Jay Kali Debi*, 5 B. L. R. 466; *Kery Kolilani v. Moneeram Kolita*, 13 B. L. R. 1, 25, 75.

(*q*) *Mohesh Chunder Roy v. Chunder Mohun Roy*, 14 B. L. R. 273; *Murari Gokuldas v. Parvatibai*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 177 (blindness); *Parashmani Dasi v. Dinanath*, 1 B. L. R., A. C. 117; *Balgovind Lall v. Pertab Singh*, S. D. of 1860, i. 661 (deaf and dumb); *Vallabhram v. Bai Hariganga*, 4 Bomb. A. C. 135 (dumb); *Umabai v. Bhavu Padmanji*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 557.

been from his birth, of such an unsound and imbecile mind as to be unable to manage his own affairs (r).

There is a difference of opinion as to whether insanity also need be congenital. The texts and cases are all collected and discussed in a judgment of the High Court of Bombay. The question for decision was only as to blindness, but the Court expressed a strong opinion that madness as well as blindness must be shown to have existed from birth (s). It may, however, be doubted whether the texts which go to this extent do not refer to the case of idiocy, which is always congenital, while madness, as distinguished from idiocy, is rather a disease than an incapacity of the mind (t). Cases of disability from lunacy have come at least twice before the Privy Council. In one (u) it was admitted that the lunacy was not congenital, and it was assumed that the only question was whether the insanity had existed at the time the succession opened. In the second (x) no question was raised as to the date of the lunacy. From the fact that the lunatic was a married man and a father, it is most probable that he had not been born so. On the other hand, in two Bengal cases it was expressly held that insanity at the time the inheritance falls in is sufficient to exclude; and in the later of the two it was further held that the insanity itself need not be incurable. If it was sufficient to prevent the claimant from offering the proper funeral oblations he was an unfit person to succeed (y). *89 L.R. Cal 149*

Whether it must be congenital.

§ 511. Leprosy of course need not be congenital. Its occurrence is looked upon as the punishment of sin, either

(r) *Tirumamagal v. Ramasawmy*, 1 Mad. H. C. 214.

(s) *Murarji Gokuldas v. Parvatibai*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 177, 182. See too *Ananta v. Ramabai*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 554.

(t) See *Nārada*, 3 Dig. 303. Other translations of the same text omit any reference to birth. W. & B. 556; *Mādhaviya*, § 49. Sir Thos. Strange (1 Stra. H. L. 153) says that all the disabilities must be coeval with birth, though *Jagannātha* seems to make the case of the madman an exception. The latter certainly says so in one passage (3 Dig. 314), though he interprets the texts of *Nārada* and *Devala* as limited to congenital madness. (Ib. 304.) So too *futwah*, W. & B. 274.

(u) *Bodhnarain Singh v. Oomrao Singh*, 13 M. I. A. 519.

(x) *Kooer Goolah v. Rao Kurun Singh*, 14 M. I. A. 176.

(y) *Braja Bhukan Lall v. Bichan Dobi*, 9 B. L. R. 204, n.; *Dwarkanath Bysack v. Mahendranath Bysack*, 9 B. L. R. 198.

Leprosy.

in a present or a past existence (z), and produces an incapacity for inheritance from the moment it is exhibited until it is removed by expiation (a). Some cases of leprosy are of a mild and curable form, while others are of a virulent and aggravated type, and incurable. It is only the latter form of the malady which causes inability to inherit (b). Other agonizing and incurable diseases are also spoken of as causing the same effect, as an example of which atrophy is given (c). It is probable, however, that the Courts would be slow to disinherit a man, merely because he was suffering from cancer or consumption, and in any case the strictest proof would be required that the disease was in fact incurable (d).

Lameness.

§ 512. Lameness is specifically alleged by Yājñavalkya as a ground of disability, and the word is explained by the Mitāksharā as meaning "deprived of the use of his feet (e)."

Loss of a limb.

The corresponding word in Manu, *nirindriya* (f), is translated by Sir W. Jones and by Prosunno Comar Tagore, "such as have lost the use of a limb." And the commentary of Vachespāti Miśra upon the text is, "*Those who have lost the use of a limb* signifies those who have been deprived of a hand, a leg, or any other member of the body. Such persons are not competent to perform ceremonies relating to the Vedas and Smṛiti. They are consequently not entitled to inherit paternal property (g)." Colebrooke translates the same word when cited in the Mitāksharā, "those who have lost a sense (or a limb)," and the explanation of Vijñaneśvara is, "any person who is deprived of an organ by disease, or any other cause, is said to have lost

(z) 3 Dig. 313, 314.

(a) *Sevachetumbara Pillay v. Parasukti*, Mad. Dec. of 1857, 210; *Lakhipriya v. Bhairab Chundra*, 5 S. D. 315 (369). See futwāh in *Laskhmi Narayan v. Tulsi Narayan*, 5 S. D. 285 (334).

(b) 3 Dig. 309, 311; 1 Strā. H. L. 156; *Muttuvelayudu Pillay v. Parasakti*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, 239, followed; *Janardhan v. Gopal Pandurang*, 5 Bomb. A. C. 145; *Ananta v. Ramabai*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 554.

(c) 3 Dig. 303, 313.

(d) See *Issur Chunder v. Ranees Dossee*, 2 W. R. 125. The D. K. S. explains the text of Nārada, which refers to a long and painful disease, as meaning a disease from the period of birth, D. K. S. iii. § 11.

(e) Mitakshara, ii. 10, § 1, 2.

(f) ix. 201.

(g) Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 242, 243.

that sense or limb (*h*).” It would appear from this that lameness arising from illness or accident would operate as a bar to inheritance. I know of no instance in which any such objection has succeeded. In a case reported by West and Bühler the disqualified person is said to have been born lame, and Jagannâtha seems to think that lameness arising subsequently would be no disability (*i*). In an early case in Bombay a person was asserted to be disqualified as a Pañgu or helpless cripple. It appeared that he could walk a little, and was a married man and a father. The Çastrî to whom the point was referred said, “that according to the Çastras a Pañgu or helpless cripple was excluded from inheritance; that the term Pañgu was not very clearly defined, but in his opinion a person deprived of the use of his hands or feet was a Pañgu; and that ‘*Nirindriya*,’ or such as were deprived of a sense, were excluded from inheritance. That persons only deformed in a hand did not come under the term ‘*Nirindriya*,’ though persons afflicted with an obstinate or incurable disease did.” He was of opinion that the claimant was not disqualified from inheritance. Upon this futwah the Appellate Court decided in favour of the claimant. The Sudder Court reversed the decision, but not upon a point affecting the question now in discussion (*k*). It would seem, therefore, that the loss of a sense or organ must be absolute or complete. Not, perhaps, necessarily the absolute want of the limb, but, at all events, a complete incapacity to make any use of it.

Lameness or
loss of a limb.

§ 513. As to vice, several futwahs from Bombay are to be found, which would practically place the son at the mercy of his father, if he chose to disinherit him for vicious habits, hostility or disobedience (*l*). In a Surat case, a will by which a father disinherited his son for vicious and dissolute habits was affirmed (*m*). But it would rather seem as if the testator’s property had been self-acquired. Further, the son had executed an agreement, acknowledging that his debts

Vice.

(*h*) Mitāksharâ. ii. 10, § 3, 4; see *per curiam*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 185.

(*i*) W. & B. 273; 3 Dig. 304.

(*k*) *Dadjee Deorao v. Wittul Deorao*, Bomb. Sel. Rep. 151.

(*l*) W. & B. 277—280.

(*m*) *Mihirwanjee v. Poonjea*, 1 Bor. 141.

Vice.

had been paid off, and admitting his father's right to disinherit him, in case of renewed misconduct. In a recent case from the N. W. Provinces the Court refused to act upon the texts which debarred a son from his share on account of his being addicted to vice, and a professed enemy of his father. They said that "the evidence given of the plaintiff's gambling and licentious propensities was of a vague and general character, and not such as would allow them to conclude that he had disqualified himself by addiction to vice for the performance of obsequies and such like acts of religion." Also that although the evidence showed that he had quarrelled with and even struck his father, it did not disclose anything like habitual maltreatment, or active and malignant hostility, which would authorise them to pronounce him a professed enemy of his father. They further observed that the texts in question were not only inapplicable to the facts, but are understood to have become obsolete in practice (*n*). In the

Fraud.

same case they refused to act upon the supposed rule which disqualifies a coparcener from obtaining his own share, where he has attempted to defraud his coparceners of any portion of their rights. In a similar (though certainly a stronger case) the rule had been strictly applied by the Sudder Court of Madras (*o*). I imagine that all such disabilities as the above would come under the head of minor grounds of forfeiture, removable by penance (*p*). In one Bengal case an adopted son, who sued for his inheritance, was met by a plea that he had publicly and falsely accused his adoptive mother of profligacy. The pandit, when consulted, replied that such an offence could only be expiated by a process of atonement, which would last twelve years, or in lieu thereof, by the gift of 180 milch cows and their calves, or their value, not to the calumniated parent, but to the Brâhmans. The Court accordingly dismissed the suit,

(*n*) *Kalka Pershad v. Budree Sah*, 3 N. W. P. 267. See *Mt. Jye Koonwur v. Bhikari Singh*, S. D. of 1848, 320, where, being a professed enemy to a father, was treated (under Mithilâ law) as a possible ground of exclusion, but not made out in fact.

(*o*) *Choondoor Lutchmedavi v. Narasimma*, Mad. Dec. of 1858, 118; ante, § 409.

(*p*) See Manu, xi. § 183—187.

holding that the claimant could not inherit until he had performed the prescribed penance (*q*). I greatly doubt, however, whether this precedent would be followed in the present day.

All grounds of disqualification which would exclude males apply equally as against female heirs (*r*). Disabilities
exclude females.

§ 514. Except in the case of degradation, the disability is purely personal, and does not extend to the legitimate issue of the disqualified person (*s*). But their adopted sons will be in no better position as regards ancestral property than themselves, and only entitled to maintenance out of it (*t*). But there seems to be no reason why the adopted son of a disqualified person should not succeed to all property which had already vested in his father, or which was acquired by him (*u*). Similarly, the widow of a disqualified heir cannot claim, as widow, to succeed to any property which her husband could not have inherited (*v*). But she would be his heir. And if his son succeeded and then died, she would inherit as mother to such son (*w*). Disability only
personal :

Property which has once vested in a person, either by inheritance or partition, is not divested by a subsequently-arising disability (*x*). not a forfeiture.

§ 515. The effect of a disability on the part of a person who would otherwise have been heir, is at once to let in the next heir. For instance, if a man left an insane son and a daughter, the latter would take at once (*y*). So if he left an insane daughter, and sons by her, the latter would take at once (*z*) that is to say, the effect of the lunacy is, for purposes of succession, exactly the same as if the lunatic was then dead. If the incapacitated person has issue then living, or in *ventre sa mère*, who would, if the father were actually dead, be the next heir, such issue will be entitled Lets in next
heir.

(*q*) *Bhola Nath v. Mt. Sabitra*, 6 S. D. 62 (71).

(*r*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 8.

(*s*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 9, 10; *Dāya Bhāga*, v. § 17—19.

(*t*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 11; *Dattaka Chandrikā*, vi. § 1; *ante*, § 97.

(*u*) *Suth. Syn.* 671.

(*v*) *D. K. S.* iii. § 17.

(*w*) 2 *W. MacN.* 130.

(*x*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 6; *Mt. Balgovind v. Lal Bahadoor*, S. D. of 1854, 244; *W. & B.* 272.

(*y*) 2 *W. MacN.* 42.

(*z*) *Bodhnarain Singh v. Oomrao Singh*, 13 *M. I. A.* 519.

Afterborn son. to succeed. But he must succeed by his own merits. He will not be allowed to step into his father's place. For instance, if a man dies, leaving a brother, and an insane brother and his son, the brother will take the whole estate; because the nephew cannot inherit while a brother is in existence. So if a man dies leaving a sister's son, who is insane, and the sister's son himself has a son, the latter cannot inherit; because the sister's grandson is not an heir (a). And if the estate has in consequence of the incapacity vested in a male, the latter becomes full and absolute owner. If the incapacitated heir has a son, subsequently conceived, that son will not inherit, even though he would have been next heir or a sharer if born, or conceived, when the succession fell in (§ 516).

Removal of disability.

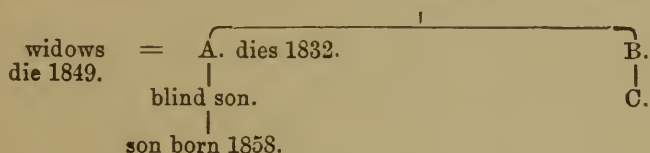
§ 516. Where the defect which produces exclusion is subsequently removed, the right to inheritance revives, in the same manner as, or upon the analogy of a son born after partition (b). The effect of this rule in cases of partition has been already discussed (§ 408). But the revival of this right will not necessarily place the previously disqualified heir in the same position as if the incapacity had never existed. The Hindu law never allows the inheritance to be in abeyance, and if he is not capable of succeeding at the time the descent takes place, the subsequent removal of his incapacity will not enable him to dispossess a person whose title was better than his while the defect existed, though inferior to his own after the defect was removed. For instance, suppose a man has a son who is born blind. If we can imagine the blindness removed before his father's death, he would of course inherit. If it was not removed, and his father died leaving a widow, she would inherit. If the blindness was cured during her life, she would continue to hold the property, but at her death, the son would likewise inherit, because he would be the nearest to her deceased husband. But if, on the father's death, his brother had inherited, and during his life the blind son was cured, and

(a) *Per Peacock, C. J., Kalidas v. Krishan Chandra*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 115. See too *Dwarkanath Bysack v. Mahendranath*, 9 B. L. R. 198, 203.

(b) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 10, § 7; *V. May.*, iv. 11, § 2.

then the brother died leaving a widow, she would inherit, and not the formerly blind son. Because succession would be traced to the last full owner who was the brother, and his heir would be the widow, and not a person who stood to him only in the relation of nephew (*c*). But if the brother died, leaving no nearer heir than a nephew, then of course the person who was previously incapacitated as son will now succeed as nephew. These principles were laid down by a Full Bench of the High Court of Bengal under the following circumstances. At the death of A. his son, being blind, was incapable of succeeding, and the estate passed to

Removal of
disability.



the widows of A., of whom the last died in 1849. At her death the estate passed to C., the nephew of A. In 1858 a son was born to the blind man, and he claimed the estate from C. If he had been alive either at the death of A., or of the last widow, he would have been the heir, but it was held that once the estate reached C., he took it with all the rights of a full owner, and could not be deprived of it by any subsequent birth (*d*). It was not necessary to decide what would have been the result if the blind man himself had recovered his sight after the property had vested in C. It might be suggested that he would have divested the estate of the nephew, on the analogy of a son born or adopted after the death of the last owner (*e*). But it is difficult to see why these analogies should be applied in his favour, and not in favour of his own son, who was born without any imperfection. The former case is really not analogous at all, as the unborn infant is in contemplation of law actually existent from conception, and is only incapable of taking at once, because it may die before leaving the womb. As to the adopted son, it seems almost sufficient

(*c*) *Mt. Bhoobun Moyee v. Ramkishore*, 10 M. I. A. 279; *ante*, § 170.

(*d*) *Kalidas v. Krishan Chandra*, 2 B. L. R., F. B. 103; *Pareshmani v. Dinanath*, 1 B. L. R., A. C. 117.

(*e*) See *per Willes, J.*, in *Tagore case*, 9 B. L. R. 397.

to say, that there can be no reason for applying analogies, drawn from the case of a very highly-favoured heir, to a disqualified heir, who is let in afterwards by special indulgence.

Entrance into
religious order.

§ 517. One who has entered into an order of devotion is also excluded from inheritance, since he has of his own accord abandoned all earthly interests (*f*). The persons who are excluded on this ground come under three heads, viz., the *Vānaprastha*, or hermit; the *Sannyāsī* or *Yatī*, or ascetic; and the *Brahmachārī*, or perpetual religious student. In order to bring a person under these heads, it is necessary to show an absolute abandonment by them of all secular property, and a complete and final withdrawal from earthly affairs. The mere fact that a person calls himself a *Vairāgī*, or religious mendicant, or indeed that he is such, does not of itself disentitle him to succeed to property (*g*).

Must be absolute
and final.

Non-Āryan
races.

I have not been able to find any evidence of the grounds which are held to exclude from inheritance by usage in the Punjāb, or among the non-Āryan races of India. It will be seen that the Madras Sudder Court has in several cases applied the Sanskrit rules to Tamil litigants. I should imagine that rules founded so completely upon Brāhmanical principles, would require to be applied with great caution to tribes who had not thoroughly accepted those principles. The more so as those principles have no foundation in natural equity or justice.

(*f*) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 137; Vāsishta, xvii. § 27; Mitāksharā, ii. 10, § 3; Dāya Bhāga, v. § 11; V. May., iv. 11, § 5.

(*g*) See *ante*, § 506; *Tiluk Chunder v. Shama Churn*, 1 W. R. 209.

CHAPTER XX.

WOMAN'S ESTATE.

In Property inherited from Males.

§ 518. THE term *Strīdhanum* (literally woman's estate) is used in two different acceptations by Hindu lawyers. In one sense it denotes that special sort of woman's estate over which she has absolute control, even during the life of her husband (*a*). In another sense it includes all sorts of property of which a woman has become the owner, whatever may be the extent of her rights over it (*b*).

Meaning of
Stridhanum.

Now it will be found that property held by a woman is at once divisible into two classes, which have completely different incidents, viz., property which has devolved upon her by inheritance from a male owner, and property which she has obtained in any other way. In speaking of *strīdhanum* hereafter I shall wholly exclude from it the former class of property. It is evident that it would only create confusion to apply the same word to estates which are obtained in different ways, and which are held by different tenure.

§ 519. The typical form of estate inherited by a woman from a male is the widow's estate. But it may now be considered that the same limitations apply to all estates derived by a female by descent from a male, in whatever capacity she may have inherited them. The only exception is as to the estate of a sister, and possibly of a daughter, in Bombay. The rule upon this point is still open to discussion.

Limitations on
inherited pro-
perty.

It was at one time common to speak of a widow's estate as being one for life. But this is wholly incorrect. It would

(a) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 1, § 18.

(b) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 11, § 3.

Not a life estate. be just as untrue to speak of the estate of a father under the Mitāksharâ law as being one for life. Hindu law knows nothing of estates for life, or in tail, or in fee. It measures estates not by duration but by use. The restrictions upon the use of an estate inherited by a woman are similar in kind to those which limit the powers of a male holder, but different in degree. The distinctive feature of the estate is, that at her death it reverts to the heirs of the last male owner. She never becomes a fresh stock of descent (c).

Reverts to heirs
of last male
holder.

§ 520. It is evident that these two qualities of her estate are connected together. It would be of little use to mark out a line of descent which should keep the estate in the family from which it came, unless the woman was restrained from absolutely disposing of it. On the other hand, the line of descent which is marked out, shows that the estate was given to the woman for a special purpose, which would be satisfied without giving any interest in it to her own immediate heirs. But it is by no means clear, whether the estate reverted to the man's heirs, because the woman was only allowed a special use of it; or whether she was only allowed the special use in order to preserve it for those heirs; or whether both incidents arose from the purpose for which such estates were originally allowed to exist.

Scanty author-
ity.

It is singular how little is to be found on the subject in the Hindu writings. We are told in very early texts that a widow is restrained in dealing with the estate she may inherit from her husband, but we are nowhere told that the same restrictions apply to other female heirs. Again, the course of inheritance laid down in the earlier texts seems to assume that the estate reverts after a widow or a daughter to the heirs of the last male; but until we come to Jîmâta Vâhana we are nowhere told that it is the rule (d). The literal wording of the Mitāksharâ seems to state that it is not the rule (e).

§ 521. As regards the first point, viz., the limited powers

(c) *Collector of Masulipatam v. C. V. Narainapah*, 8 M. 1. A. 529, 550; *Kery Kolitani v. Moneeram*, 13 B. L. R. 5, 53, 76.

(d) *Dâya Bhâga*, xi. 1, § 57—59; xi. 2, § 30, 31.

(e) See *post*, § 524.

of disposal possessed by a female—we must recollect that according to Hindu law restriction was the rule, absolute power the exception. Even the male head of a family was hemmed in by limitations. These were gradually reduced in their application, when separate and self-acquired property was introduced, and at last disappeared entirely in the Bengal system. It would have seemed absurd to a Hindu lawyer that any one should imagine that a female, herself a most subordinate member of the family, could possess higher rights over its property than its head. The earlier writers contented themselves with general statements that a woman was never fit for independence, but must at every stage of her life be under the tutelage of some male protector, the widow being under the control of her husband's family (*f*). As regards the widow, too, the state of asceticism in which she was expected to live was of itself a restriction upon her right to spend the property (*g*). Most of the texts which definitely speak of the restrictions upon a woman's power of dealing with property relate to a widow. Kātyāyana says, "Let the childless widow, preserving unsullied the bed of her lord, and abiding with her venerable protector, enjoy with moderation the property until her death. After her, let the heirs take it. But she has not property therein to the extent of gift, mortgage, or sale (*h*)."¹ The Mahābhārata says, "For women the heritage of their husbands is pronounced applicable to use. Let not women on any account make waste of their husband's wealth (*i*)."² Nārada, however, lays down the same proposition with greater generality: "Women's business transactions are null and void, except in case of distress, especially the gift, pawning, or sale of a house or field. Women are not entitled to make a gift or sale; a woman can only take a life-interest whilst she is living together with the rest of the family. Such transactions of

Limited power
of disposal.

(*f*) Manu, viii. § 416; ix. § 2, 3, 104; Baudhāyana, ii. 2, § 27; Nārada, xii. § 28—30; Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 1, § 35—39.

(*g*) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 61; 2 Dig. 459; *per curiam*, 8 M. I. A. 551.

(*h*) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 56; V. May., iv. 8, § 4; Vivāda Chintāmañi, 292; Vṛhaspati, cited Smṛiti Chandrikā, xi. 1, § 28.

(*i*) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 1, § 60.

Cause of the
restriction.

women are valid where the husband has given his consent, or, in default of the husband, the son, or in default of husband and son, the king (*k*).” If, as I have already suggested (*l*), the widow’s inheritance originally commenced as a compendious mode of enabling her to maintain herself, it would naturally follow, both that her right of using the property would be limited, and that after her death, it would revert to the heirs of her husband’s family. Probably the same origin may be ascribed to the limitations on the estate of a mother and other female ancestor.

§ 522. The same reasoning, however, would not apply to the case of a daughter. She takes the inheritance not by way of maintenance—the obligation to maintain her ending at marriage,—but as beneficial owner. In her case, possibly, the limitation arose originally from the natural dislike to any succession which would carry the property of the family permanently into a different line (*m*). This principle would be strengthened when inheritance came to be looked on as a reward for religious benefits. Under that system, each heir takes the estate *primâ facie* as a means of performing the religious obsequies of the last male. When the heir is himself a male, his own obsequies require to be attended to, therefore at his death, the property passes to those who are bound to make offerings to him, that is, to his own heirs. But where the property is taken by a female, her obsequies are provided for quite independently, viz., in her husband’s family, if she is married. The duty which has to be performed to the deceased male still remains, and it can only be discharged by returning the estate to a member of his family, who, as being his heir, is bound to discharge his funeral rites. Now if the female holder is bound to return the property into his family, an obligation would naturally arise to return it intact. She would be considered as holding the property for a special purpose, and bound to pass it on to the next heir, with its capacity for performing that purpose undiminished.

(*k*) Nārada, iii. § 27—30.

(*l*) *Ante*, § 447.

(*m*) The rule is thoroughly established by usage in the Punjāb as regards both widows, daughters, and mothers. Punjāb Customs, 16, 45, 52, 54, 58.

§ 523. Whatever may be the origin of the rule, there can be no doubt now that the rule exists universally (except perhaps in Bombay) that where any female takes as heir to a male, she takes a restricted estate, and on her death the property passes not to her heirs, but to the person who would be the next heir of the last full owner. In Bengal the point was always beyond dispute, as it was expressly so laid down by Jímûta Vahâna (*n*). It was at one time supposed that a different rule prevailed in Southern India (*o*). This idea was based on a text of the Mitâksharâ which appears to class such property as *strîdhanum*, which passes to the heirs of the woman. In Madras it will be seen that no weight is any longer attributed to that text. But as it appears to be at the root of a conflicting series of decisions in Bombay, and as the matter is also one of much historical interest, it will be necessary to examine the passage somewhat minutely.

Restriction
applies to all
female heirs.

§ 524. The whole discussion turns upon the question, whether the devolution of a woman's property, stated by the Mitâksharâ at ii. 11, § 8, 9, applies to all the sorts of property which he had already described at § 2, 3, of the same section, or only to some of those sorts of property. Section 11 is a commentary on the three texts of Yājñavalkya (ii. § 143—145) which relate to *strîdhanum*, illustrated in the author's usual manner by citations from other writers. He commences (§ 1) by quoting the first of the three texts in a manner which is translated by Mr. Colebrooke as follows:—"What was given to a woman by the father, the mother, the husband or a brother, or received by her at the nuptial fire, or presented to her on her husband's marriage to another wife, as also any other (separate acquisition), is denominated woman's property." Now the word in the original text, which is here rendered *any other*, is *âdi* annexed to the preceding term, which really means "and the like," and is so translated elsewhere (*p*). *Primâ facie*, therefore, they

Supposed excep-
tion under
Mitâksharâ.

(*n*) Dâya Bhâga, xi. 1, § 57—59; xi. 2, § 30, 31; 3 Dig. 494, 497; *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Rungunmoney*, Sev. 657.

(*o*) 1 Stra. H. L. 139; Stra. Man. § 354; Mad. Dec. of 1850, p. 76; of 1856, p. 47; 1858, p. 244; W. & B. 65; 481.

(*p*) See translation of the text, ii. 143, by Montrou and Roer, and Stenzler;

Strīdhanum
defined by
Mitāksharā,

only refer to property of the same nature as the foregoing, that is, to special gifts made to a woman by her own family, and to particular gifts made to her as a bride, or a superseded wife. In the next section Vijñaneśvara repeats and expands this text, adding, "and also property which she may have acquired by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure or finding, are denominated by Manu and the rest 'woman's property.'" Now Manu certainly says nothing of the sort. His enumeration (ix. § 194) is contained in the fourth clause of the same section of the Mitāksharā. It is so strictly limited to personal gifts, that Vijñaneśvara and others think it necessary to add, that the six classes of gifts there stated are not exclusive of any other sorts of property. But the general statement which closes § 2 will be found in Gautama, cited in the Mitāksharā, i. 1, § 8. "An owner is by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure or finding (*q*)."

But this is a definition of ownership in general, not of woman's property, specially so called. The passage of the Mitāksharā, therefore, merely comes to this, that a woman may acquire property, not only by the special modes, which give it peculiar incidents of alienability and succession, as *strīdhanum*, strictly so called, but by any other mode by which a male can acquire it. Then at § 3 he makes this quite clear by saying, "The term woman's property conforms in its import with its etymology, and is not technical, for, if the literal sense be admissible, a technical acceptation is improper." That is to say, he gives the reader express notice that, when he uses the word *strīdhanum*, he means, not "woman's property" specially and technically so called, but the property of a woman, vested in her by any legal means (*r*). Then at § 8 he says, "A woman's property has been thus described. The author (that is, Yājñavalkya) next propounds the distribution of it. 'Her kinsmen take it, if she die without

has no technical
meaning.

also by Dr. Burnell, Varadrājah, p. 45. See also his remarks, Introd. p. 13; Mayr, 171.

(*q*) And see Manu, x. § 115, where he points out seven virtuous modes of acquiring property, the last three of which at all events are peculiar to men.

(*r*) This is directly opposed to the use of the word by Jīmūta Vāhana. "That alone is her peculiar property which she has power to give, sell, or use, independently of her husband's control." Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 18.

issue.'” The question is, to what sort of property does this rule apply? Does it apply to *strīdhanum* in its technical, or in its general, meaning? In other words, does it apply to it as defined by Yājñavalkya, or as defined by Vijñaneśvara? I think it evidently applies to it in its former, or restricted sense. The rule is a citation of the second of the three texts of Yājñavalkya. It follows in the original after the definition given by Yājñavalkya, and it can only apply to the sorts of property specified by Yājñavalkya. It is evidently not an exhaustive statement of the mode in which all property, however acquired by a woman, will devolve, for at clauses 14, 20 and 30, three other modes of descent are mentioned. These modes are different from that specified by Yājñavalkya, and apply to property which is not included in his definition. No part of this section of the Mitāksharā applies in terms to property which a woman has inherited from a male. But the reason for that obviously is, that the devolution of such property had been exhaustively treated in the former sections of the same chapter. In those sections he explained how a man's property would go to his widow, his daughter, his daughter's son, and, in default of them, to parents and others. But if the section now under consideration applies to property inherited by a woman from a male, the result would be that if a daughter took property it would go to her daughter, or her daughter's son, or her son's son, or to her husband. But this is a line of descent directly opposed to everything in the parts of the Mitāksharā which expressly treat of the descent of such property. In short, the view I would submit is this. Vijñaneśvara includes under the term *strīdhanum* property which a woman has acquired in any way whatever. The descent of that which she has derived from a male—that is from a husband, father, or son—is treated of in the earlier sections of chap. ii.; that which she obtained otherwise, is treated of in § 11 (s). Its other quality, viz., alienability, he appears nowhere to discuss.

Text of the
Mitāksharā
discussed.

(s) See *per Holloway, J., Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga*, 6 Mad. H. C. at p. 340. This explanation would deprive the passage of the significance attributed to it by Sir H. S. Maine. *Early Institutions*, 321.

Cannot apply to widow.

Held inapplicable to mother.

§ 525. If the passage in the Mitāksharâ is to be taken as meaning, that all property which a woman takes by inheritance goes to her special heirs, and not to those of the last male, the same rule should apply to every case in which a woman inherits in that way; to a widow or a mother, as much as to a sister or a daughter. Such a devolution in the case of property inherited by a widow is directly opposed to the whole theory of the Mitāksharâ, and to the usage of every part of India. This very text of the Mitāksharâ has been, on two occasions at least, pressed upon the Judicial Committee as an argument for holding, that a widow has greater power over property inherited from her husband in provinces governed by that law, than elsewhere. But the argument has always failed, and it is thoroughly settled that a widow takes only a restricted estate, and that at her death it passes to her husband's heirs (*t*). And this is admitted in its fullest sense by the High Court of Bombay (*u*). It is also admitted by the Courts of all the Presidencies that the mother and grandmother, when inheriting from a son or grandson, take an estate similar in all respects to that of a widow (*x*). If so, the presumption is very strong that the passage should be interpreted in the case of other female heirs, so as to admit of a similar application. It is also to be observed, and the fact is relied on by the Privy Council, that, with the exception of the disputed passage in the Mitāksharâ, and of a paragraph where it is cited in the Vîramitrodaya (*y*), there is not a single text, either of a Hindu

(*t*) *Mt. Thakoor Deyhee v. Rai Baluk Ram*, 11 M. I. A. 139, 173; *Bughwan-deen Doobey v. Myna Bae*, ib. 487, 509; *Collector of Masulipatam v. C. V. Narrainapah*, 8 M. I. A. 529; *Vivâda Chintâmani*, 261; *Keerut Singh v. Koolahul Singh*, 2 M. I. A. 331.

(*u*) *Per curiam*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 130; 2 Bomb. H. C. 10; *Lakshmi Bai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 163; *Bhasker v. Mahadev*, 6 Bomb. O. C. 1.

(*x*) 1 W. MacN. 25; 2 W. MacN. 125, 209; 3 Dig. 505. See as to Bengal, *Mt. Bijia v. Mt. Unpoorna*, 1 S. D. 162 (215); *Nufur Mitter v. Ram Koomar*, 4 S. D. 310 (393); *Bhyrobee v. Nubkissen*, 6 S. D. 53 (61); *Hemluta v. Goluck-chunder*, 7 S. D. 103 (127); *Rughober v. Mt. Tulashee*, S. D. of 1847, 87. As to Mithilâ, *Vivâda Chintâmani*, 263; *Punchanund v. Lalshan*, 3 W. R. 140. As to Madras, *Bachiraju v. Venkatappadu*, 2 Mad. H. C. 402; *Kutti v. Radakrishna*, 8 Mad. H. C. 88; *Vellanki v. Venkata Rama*, 4 I. A. 1, 8. As to Bombay, *Vinayek v. Luxumabae*, 1 Bomb. H. C. 117; *Narsappa v. Sakharam*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 215; As to the N. W. P., *Phukar Singh v. Ranjit Singh*, 1 All. 661; *Sakporam v. Sitabai*, 3 Bomb. L. R., 353; *Dhondur Gurav v. Gangabai*, ib. 369.

(*y*) W. & B. 496. To the above must now be added the authority of *Aparârka*. W. & B. Preface, iv.

sage, or of a commentator, in which property acquired by inheritance is classed as *strīdhanum*. All the other writers restrict the term to special gifts. Kātyāyana even excludes the earnings of a woman, or what she has received from any but the kindred of her husband or parents (z). The obvious explanation of this is, that Vijñaneśvara was using the term in one sense, and they were using it in another.

§ 526. The only female who can inherit to a male, except Case of daughter.
in Bombay, is a daughter. That property which she takes as daughter does not pass from her as *strīdhanum*, is evident, not only from the fact that the daughters of a daughter are admittedly never heirs, except in Bombay, when they come in as very distant *bandhus*, but also from the circumstance that where there are several daughters, each of whom has sons, no son takes till all the daughters are dead, and then all take *per capita* (§ 478), that is, they take as direct heirs to the male ancestor, and not as representing their mothers. It has been repeatedly decided by the Bengal Courts, not only in Bengal.
cases under the Dāya Bhāga, but also under Mithilā and Mitāksharā law, that the estate of a daughter exactly corresponds to that of a widow, both in respect to the restricted power of alienation, and to its succession after her death to her father's heirs, and not her own (a). The same point has been twice decided in a similar manner by the High Court of Madras, after a full examination of the passage in the Madras.
Mitāksharā, and of the Bombay authorities which have taken a different view (b). The High Court of Bombay, however, Bombay.
has decided that a daughter takes an absolute estate, which

(z) Manu, ix. § 194, 195; 3 Dig. 557, *et seq.*; Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 256; V. May., iv. 10; Smṛiti Chandrikā, ix. 1; xi. 3, § 8; Mādharīya, § 50; Varadrājah, 45. Messrs. West and Bühler take the opposite view to that which I have suggested, and push it to the full extent of holding that property which devolves on a widow is her *strīdhanum*; W. & B. 445, 467. In this respect even the Bombay authorities disagree with them. See *per curiam*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 163.

(a) Dāya Bhāga, xi. 2, § 30; 1 W. MacN. 21; 2 W. MacN. 224; F. MacN. 7; *Gunga Mya v. Kishen Kishore*, 3 S. D. 128 (170); *Gosaien Chund v. Mt. Kishen*, 6 S. D. 77 (90), from Bengal.; *Mt. Gyan v. Dookhurn*, 4 S. D. 330 (420); *Deo Pershad v. Lujoo Roy*, 20 W. R. 102, from Mithilā. *Chotay Lall v. Chunnoo*, 14 B. L. R. 235, Benares law; where the Bombay decisions were considered and disapproved. Affirmed in P. C., 6 I. A. 15. *Hurry Doss v. Streemutty Uppoornah*, 6 M. I. A. 433; where it was unnecessary to decide the point.

(b) *Sengamalathammal v. Velayuda*, 3 Mad. H. C. 312; *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga*, 6 Mad. H. C. 310.

descends to her heirs as *strīdhanum*. It will be necessary to examine these cases a little in detail.

Dewcooverbae's
case

§ 527. The leading case as to the rights of daughters, is one known as *Dewcooverbae's* case (c), decided on the Equity side of the Supreme Court, in 1859. There an estate passed first to the widows, and then to the daughters. Sausse, C.J., said as to the latter, "What then is the nature of the estate they take? Here again there are differences of opinion, but, dealing with the question according to the three works I have mentioned (Manu, Mitāksharâ, Mayûkha), we find quoted in the Mayûkha (iv. 8, § 10) a passage from Manu. 'The son of a man is even as himself, and the daughter is equal to a son; how then can any other inherit his property, but a daughter who is as it were himself (d).' With reference to this point also I consulted the Çastris, both here and at Poona, and enquired whether daughters could alienate any, and what portion, of the property inherited from a father who died separate? The answer was, that daughters so obtaining property could alienate it at their will and pleasure; and in this the Çastris of both places agreed, both also referring to the above text in the Mayûkha as the authority for that position. On reviewing all accessible authorities, I have come to the conclusion that daughters take the immovable property absolutely from their father after their mother's death."

discussed.

Now upon this judgment it may be remarked, that it rests upon a text of Manu, which is the basis of a daughter's right throughout India, and which is relied on by the Dâya Bhâga and the Mitāksharâ, just as much as by the Mayûkha. There can be no reason why it should be given a different effect in Western India from that which it receives elsewhere. The text itself merely points out the order of succession to a man who has left no issue, and does not discuss the amount of interest which the daughter takes. It is followed by other texts (e), which declare that the daughter's son is the proper person to offer the funeral cake

(c) 1 Bomb. H. C. 130; 9 M. I. A. 523, note.

(d) Manu, ix. § 130. See this text discussed *ante*, § 442.

(e) Manu, ix. § 132—136. See these examined, *ante*, § 477.

to his maternal grandfather, and that he is equivalent in merit to a son's son. It is hardly likely that Manu intended to place a daughter in a position opposed to that state of dependence which he prescribes for all women (§ 521), and which would enable her absolutely to disinherit the son, who was the meritorious cause of her taking at all. The opinions of the *Qastris* would have been very important if they had asserted any established usage, but they seem merely to have referred to the same text as their authority. Their opinions as to a daughter's power of alienation are directly opposed to opinions of the *Surat Qastris*, and decisions founded upon them, in which it was held that a daughter, inheriting to her father, could not dispose of such property without the consent of her son (*f*). It is not likely that the learned Chief Justice was able to consult the *Qastris* himself, and in their own language. Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the opinions of pandits, reported at second hand, and without the express words of the question put to them, and of their answer upon it.

Bombay decisions as to daughter.

§ 528. The same question was again discussed in 1864, when the Court held that property, which had descended from a father to a daughter, would pass from her to *her* daughter, and to that daughter's son, and back from him to his father (*g*). It is a curious thing that the whole judgment was based upon a misapprehension. The property had passed from the father to the son, who died an infant. Then it went to the mother. On her death the descent would be traced back to the son, not to the father (*h*). Consequently the person who was supposed to take as daughter really took as sister. The reasoning of the Court was, that according to the *Mitāksharâ*, the *Mayûkha*, and all the authorities except those of Bengal, a woman took as *strīdhanum* that which she obtained by inheritance. The effect of the passage in the *Mitāksharâ* has already been discussed (§ 524). The *Mayûkha* certainly says

Navalram v. Nandkishore.

(*f*) *Poonjea v. Prankoonvur*, 1 Bor. 173; *Krishnaram v. Mt. Bheekhee*, 2 Bor. 329.

(*g*) *Navalram v. Nandkishore*, 1 Bomb. 209.

(*h*) See an exactly similar case in the P. C., *Vellanki v. Venkata Rama*, 4 I. A. 1.

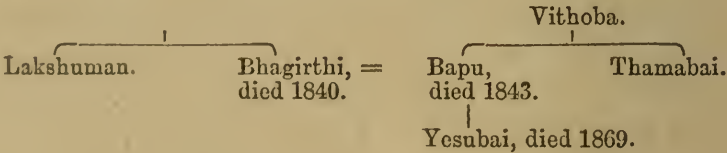
Navalram v.
Nandkishore.

nothing of the sort, unless an intention to include property obtained by inheritance can be inferred from the statement, that the six sorts of *strīdhanum* described by Manu may include other sorts (i). The Court admitted that the Gastris of Guzerat, where the authority of the Mayūkha is supreme, did not recognize property obtained by inheritance as *strīdhanum* (k). But they set against this an answer found in Borrodaile's collection of caste usages. "If a woman inherits movable or immovable property from her father, and dies childless, that property reverts to the father's family, but if she leaves a daughter, the latter is the heir." The caste referred to in this answer was the caste to which the daughter in the suit before them belonged. Any established usage of the sort would, of course, stand apart from all reasoning founded on the Hindu law-books. But the ultimate decision of the Court seems to have been, that the property descended to the daughter as *strīdhanum*, and descended from her as *strīdhanum*. Assuming the former proposition to be sound, the latter is open to another objection. It has been repeatedly laid down that *strīdhanum* only makes one descent as such. Otherwise property which a woman had once received by inheritance as *strīdhanum*, would continue to descend in a perpetual female line, as long as females existed. To what line of heirs it passes on its second descent, is a matter of greater difficulty (l). This will be discussed in reference to the next case, and in regard to *strīdhanum*, properly so called (§ 581).

Stridhanum
only descends
once as such.

Vijiarangam v.
Lakshuman.

§ 529. The latest case in which this question came before the High Court of Bombay was the case of *Vijiarangam v. Lakshuman* (m). There certain property descended from



(i) V. May., iv. 10, § 2.
(k) See Steele, 64, note ; 67.
(l) D. K. S. ii. 3, § 6 ; 1 W. MacN. 38 ; *Prankishen v. Mt. Bhagwutee*, 1 S. D. 3 (4) ; *Srinath Gangopadya v. Sarbamangala*, 2 B. L. R., A. C. 144 ; *per curiam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 314 ; 14 B. L. R. 237 ; 6 Bomb. O. C. 18.
(m) 8 Bomb. O. C. 244.

Vithoba to Bapu, and from him to his daughter Yesubai. At her death Lakshuman, her mother's brother, and Thamabai, her father's sister, each claimed to carry on a suit in which she was engaged in reference to the property. It was decided that Thamabai was entitled. A most elaborate judgment was pronounced by Mr. Justice West, in which he naturally took the same view upon the subject of *strīdhanum* that had been propounded by the learned editors of West and Bühler's Digest (n). He held that the property which had descended to Yesubai from her father was her *strīdhanum*. But according to the Mayūkha (iv. 10, § 26), inherited property, though it is *strīdhanum*, not being one of those kinds of *strīdhanum* for which express texts prescribe exceptional modes of descent, goes on the woman's death to her sons and the rest, as if she were a male, and this notwithstanding her having daughters. This being so, the property inherited by Yesubai would, in the absence of descendants, go to her parents, just as if she had been their only son, and failing them to the paternal grandmother and the *sapinḍas* of the father, the *gotrajas* taking precedence over the *bhin-nagotras*. But according to the doctrine of Western India, a female who is born in the family is a *gotraja sapinḍa*. Therefore Thamabai (though married) was the next heir. The High Court of Bombay has, however, in a still later case directly affirmed the principle, that a daughter, who takes immoveable property by descent from her father, takes it as an absolute and several estate which she may give away or devise at her pleasure. (*Haribhat v. Damodharbhat*, 3 Bomb. L. R. 171).

Special descent
of inherited
stridhanum.

§ 530. This view practically gets rid of the idea that property, inherited by a daughter, would pass to her heirs in the line of descent of *strīdhanum* properly so-called. It would make it go in a new line of descent, as if she were a male. But even then it might go to her daughters, which is contrary to the law of Mitāksharâ. But it is very questionable whether Nīlakaṇṭha meant anything of the sort. The translation of the passage referred to by Mr. Justice West (o) is

(n) W. & B. 481.

(o) 8 Bomb. O. C. 260.

as follows :—" It is clear that although there be daughters the sons or other heirs still succeed to the mother's estate, as far as it is distinct from the part already described (as subject to the peculiar devolution under texts applicable to particular species of *strīdhanum*). " The meaning of this appears to me to be, " the mother's estate does not descend according to the rules applicable to *strīdhanum*, but is taken by such heirs, being sons or otherwise, as would have taken it if the accident of its falling to a woman had never occurred." Where, therefore, the property had come to the mother from a male, it would return to the heirs of that male. This is precisely the law of the Mitāksharā as I understand it.

According to
the Mitāksharā.

Mitāksharā
law.

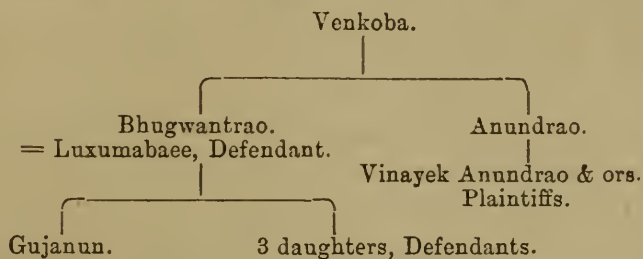
§ 531. The learned Judge then went on to pronounce his views as to the law of the Mitāksharā (*p*). He considered that according to it, property inherited by a woman would pass like *strīdhanum*, strictly so-called. In this particular case, as Yesubai's marriage was in the *Āsura* form, her *strīdhanum* would go to her parents and their next of kin. But as by marriage Bagirthi would pass into the family of her husband, the *sapīṇḍas* of Bagirthi and Bapu would be, in the first instance, Bapu's blood relations, of whom, according to Western law, Thamabai was the nearest living. According to either principle of descent, Thamabai was the heir.

As the case was necessarily decided by the law of the Mayūkha, of course everything said by the learned Judge as to the different system of the Mitāksharā was *obiter dictum*. But it is important to observe, that exactly the same result would have been arrived at upon the doctrines laid down in Bengal and Madras. According to them, on the death of Yesubai, the property would go to the person who was next heir to Bapu, the last male holder. But in Western India, his sister was clearly the nearest heir. Westropp, C. J., assented to the conclusions of his learned colleague, but gave no opinion as to his reasoning. He merely said, that according to the Mayūkha, Thamabai was the heir. This she undoubtedly was on any view of the law.

§ 532. As regards the right of sisters, the only decisions

available are from Bombay, since, with the exception of a single case in Madras, their claim is not recognized in other parts of India. The rulings of the Bombay High Court are to the effect that they take an absolute interest. Right of sisters.

In the first case (*q*) Bhugwantrao died, leaving a will by which he bequeathed all his property to Luxumabae and his infant son Gujanun, and made his wife sole executrix. Gujanun survived him, and then died an infant. The plaintiffs, nephews of Bhugwantrao, filed their bill against



the widow and daughters. They prayed for a declaration that the widow was only entitled for life, and that they were entitled as next heirs in remainder. It is stated that the bill set out various acts and omissions amounting to waste, and charged Luxumabae with attempting to adopt. It prayed that she should be restrained from selling or disposing of any part of the estate, from committing waste, and from adopting. The bill was demurred to, so that all the allegations contained in it were taken as true.

*Vinayek v.
Luxumabae.*

The whole argument turned upon the asserted right of the plaintiffs as next heirs after the widow. The Court held that the persons to succeed after Luxumabae were the heirs of Gujanun, and that according to the Mayûkha those heirs were his sisters, the defendants, and not his cousins, the plaintiffs. This decision was confirmed by the Privy Council. But at the end of their judgment (*r*), the Supreme Court said, that as to the mode in which sisters take it would appear by analogy that they take as daughters. As it had been decided by *Dewcooverbae's* case that the daughters of a man take absolutely, so therefore do the sisters. In confirming this decision, the Judicial Committee said (*s*),

*Sisters said to
take absolutely.*

(*q*) *Vinayek Anundrao v. Luxumabae*, 1 Bomb. 117; affirmed, 9 M. I. A. 516.

(*r*) 1 Bomb. 124.

(*s*) 9 M. I. A. 538.

"They consider that in Bombay at least the sisters in such a case as this are the heirs of the brother. The consequence is, that in whatever possible manner the will of the testator is read, the entire interest in the property must, we think, be viewed as vested in the widow and her daughters, or some or one of them, and that, therefore, the appellants here, the sons of the brother of the testator, are suing in a matter in which they have not shewn the slightest interest, nor with which they have any concern. The result is, that in their Lordships' opinion the demurrer was rightly allowed, and that the appeal should be dismissed with costs."

§ 533. The force of these decisions consists in the fact that they were given upon demurrer. If, therefore, the bill alleged acts of waste which would have entitled reversioners coming in after the sisters to an injunction, then, inasmuch as the demurrer admitted the allegations in the bill, the decision is conclusive that the estate was vested absolutely in the daughters, after the widow's life estate. It is plain, however, that the prayer forbidding alienations or adoption by the widow could never have been granted, as such acts were consistent with her limited estate (t). It is probable that the general allegation of waste was not put in any form which would have supported a decree. It is quite certain that the plaintiffs rested their whole case on the assertion that they were next in succession to the widow, and that the sisters were not heirs at all, and the question of heirship appears to have been the only one argued. It is possible, therefore, that the decision would not be considered as settling anything beyond the right of sisters to succeed to their brother in Western India. It is also to be remarked, that the Court merely decide that the quality of a sister's estate must be taken to be the same as that of a daughter's estate. They assume that *Dewcooverbaee's* case had settled that this latter estate was an absolute one. If ever that view should be reversed in Bombay, the same limitation will have to be applied to the estate of a sister.

Extent of
sister's estate.

(t) See *Hurrydoss v. Strimutty Uppurnah*, 6 M. I. A. 433.

§ 534. This decision was followed by the High Court of Bombay in a later case, where it was held by Arnould, J., sitting on the original side, that a sister, taking as heir to her brother, takes his property as *strīdhanum*, with an absolute power of disposition over it, and that such property passes, in the first instance, to her daughters. He also affirmed the general proposition, that all property acquired by a married woman by inheritance, with the exception of property inherited by a widow from her husband, classes as *strīdhanum*, and descends accordingly (*u*).

*Bhasker Trim-
bak v. Mahadev*

This decision professed to rest entirely on the case last quoted, and can have no higher or additional authority. I may perhaps be allowed to point out, that the judgment itself has been silently over-ruled in every other point. So far as it asserts that every estate of inheritance taken by a married woman, except that of a widow, is *strīdhanum*, it is opposed to the later case of *Narsappa Lingappa v. Sakharam* (*x*), which settled that a mother's estate was exactly on the same footing as a widow's. So far as it decides that the estate taken by a sister would pass to her daughter, in preference to her sons, it is opposed to the decision in *Vijiarungum v. Lakshuman* (*y*). In that case West, J., held that if property inherited by a woman was her *strīdhanum*, still it passed from her in the same order of descent as if she had been a male, that is, first to her sons.

§ 535. Partition is another mode by which the property of a male may come into the hands of a female. This, however, can hardly ever take place except in Bengal. In Southern and Western India women never appear to take upon partition anything more than a life provision for maintenance. And though the contrary rule is asserted as to the provinces governed by Benares law, the cases seem very rare (*z*). In two early cases which came before the Supreme

Property
obtained on
partition.

(*u*) *Bhasker Trimbak v. Mahadev Ramji*, 6 Bomb. O. C. 1.

(*x*) 6 Bomb. A. C. 215.

(*y*) 8 Bomb. O. C. 244; *ante*, § 529.

(*z*) *Ante*, §§ 402—406; *Gooroobuksh v. Lutchmana Pershad*, Mad. Dec. of 1850, 61.

Property
obtained on
partition.

Court of Calcutta, where a share was decreed to a widow on partition, the Court seems at first to have treated her share as governed by the laws which regulate the right of a woman over property given to her by her husband, and not by those which relate to property inherited from him (a). Consequently in each case their first decree was that she should take the movable property absolutely, and the immovable only for life. But in each case they reviewed their decree, and ordered that she should take the whole to be enjoyed in the manner prescribed by Hindu law; that is, for a widow's estate. The Court Pandits "expressly declared that the mother who took upon partition, and the widow who succeeded to her husband's property, stood upon the same footing with regard to their interests in the estates (b)." The Judicial Committee treat it as an open question, whether a widow taking a share on partition does not take an absolute interest in that share, though they observe that in a case coming from Lower Bengal, the contrary had been decided by themselves (c). Of course it would be different if, by the terms of the partition, the widow or mother took an absolute estate (d). Jagannâtha seems to be of the contrary opinion, so far as it is possible to make out what his opinion is (e). But upon analogy there can be no reason why a woman who takes part of a property on partition between her sons, should have a larger interest than if she had taken the whole in the absence of sons.

Her power of
disposal

§ 536. EXTENT OF A WOMAN'S ESTATE.—The nature of a woman's estate must, as already stated, be described by the restrictions which are placed upon it, and not by terms of duration. It is not a life estate, because under certain circumstances she can give an absolute and complete title. Nor is it in any sense an estate held in trust for reversioners. Within

(a) See as to the distinction *per curiam*, 11 M. I. A. 510.

(b) *Cossinath v. Hurrosoondery*, affirmed on appeal to P. C., 2 M. Dig. 198; F. MacN. 79, 85, 88; V. Darp. 97; *Gooroopershad v. Seebchunder*, F. MacN. 69, 73; *Kamikhapershad v. Strimati Jagadamba*, 5 B. L. R. 508.

(c) *Per curiam*, 11 M. I. A. 514, referring apparently to *Cossinath v. Hurrosoondery*.

(d) *Bolye Chund v. Khetterpaul*, 11 B. L. R. 459; *Rampershad v. Chaineram*, 1 N. W. P., H. C. 10.

(e) 3 Dig., 22.

the limits imposed upon her, the female holder has the most absolute power of enjoyment. She is accountable to no one, and fully represents the estate, and so long as she is alive no one has any vested interest in the succession. On the other hand the limitations upon her estate are the very substance of its nature, and not merely imposed upon her for the benefit of reversioners. They exist as fully if there are absolutely no heirs to take after her, as if there were. Acts which would be unlawful as against heirs expectant, are equally invalid as against the Sovereign claiming by escheat (*f*). The principles which restrict a widow were laid down by the Judicial Committee in the case cited above, as follows: "It is admitted, on all hands, that if there be collateral heirs of the husband, the widow cannot of her own will alien the property except for special purposes. For religious or charitable purposes, or those which are supposed to conduce to the spiritual welfare of her husband, she has a larger power of disposition than that which she possesses for purely worldly purposes. To support an alienation for the last, she must show necessity. On the other hand, it may be taken as established that an alienation by her which would not otherwise be legitimate, may become so if made with the consent of her husband's kindred. But it surely is not the necessary or logical consequence of this latter proposition, that in the absence of collateral heirs to the husband, or on their failure, the fetter on the widow's power of alienation altogether drops. The exception in favour of alienation with consent may be due to a presumption of law that where that consent is given, the purpose for which the alienation is made must be proper."

defined by
Judicial Com-
mittee.

§ 537. It is probable that in early times a widow was morally, if not legally, bound to restrain her personal expenditure within the modest limits which were considered suitable to her bereaved condition (*g*). But whatever may in

Full power of
enjoyment.

(*f*) *Collector of Masulipatam v. G. V. Naranapah*, 8 M. I. A. 529, 550. *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Rungunmoney*, Sev. 657, where the nature of the estate is very fully described by Peel, C. J.

(*g*) It seems to have been the opinion of Mitter, J., that she was still subject to such a restraint. See his remarks, *Kery Kolitany v. Moneeram Kolita*, 13 B. L. R. 5; but see *contra*, per *Glover and Kemp*, JJ., ib. 53, 76.

former times have been the force of the injunctions contained in such passages of the Hindu Çâstras, or whatever may now be their effect as religious or moral precepts, they cannot be regarded at the present day as of any legal force, in restricting a widow in the use and enjoyment of her husband's property while she lives. Her absolute right to the fullest benefit of her life-interest appears long to have been recognized (*h*). And of course there could be still less reason for imposing any such restrictions upon other female heirs. A woman is in no sense a trustee for those who may come after her. She is not bound to save the income. She is not bound to invest the principal. If she chooses to invest it, she is not bound to prefer one form of investment to another form, as being more likely to protect the interests of the reversioners. She is forbidden to commit waste, or to endanger the property in her possession, but short of that, she may spend the income and manage the principal as she thinks proper (*i*). If she makes savings, she can give them away as she likes during her life. She is not bound to leave anything behind her beyond that which she received (*k*).

Not a trustee.

Accumulations.

Her interest in accumulations

§ 538. The law as to the right of a woman to accumulations from the estate of the last male holder is rather complicated, and appears to be in some respects unsettled. These accumulations may be, 1st. Accumulations made by her husband, or other male to whom she succeeds. 2nd. Accumulations made after his death, and before the estate was handed over to her. 3rd. Accumulations made by herself personally, and either invested, or converted into some different form, or else remaining uninvested in her possession.

made by last holder:

1. Accumulations made by the last male holder would in general be accretions to his estate, and follow it. In such a case, of course, no question could arise. The female would

(*h*) *Per curiam*, *Kamavadhani v. Joysa Narasingappa*, 3 Mad. H. C. 116; *Cossinath Bysack v. Hurrosundery Dossee*, 2 M. Dig. 198, 214, affirmed in P. C. Morton, 85; V. Darp. 97; *Gooroobuksh v. Lutchmana Prasad*, Mad. Dec. of 1850, 61.

(*i*) *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Stremutty Uppurnah*, 6 M. I. A. 433; *Biswanath Chandra v. Khantomani Dasi*, 6 B. L. R. 747; *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Rungun-money*, Sev. 657.

(*k*) *Chundrabullee Debia v. Brody*, 9 W. R. 584; *Herendranarayan's goods*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 41.

take the whole as an entire estate, subject to the usual restrictions. There might, however, be a special settlement which would cause the *corpus* of the last male holder's estate to pass to a male, and the accumulations to go by heirship to a female. In such a case she would hold these accumulations as a new estate, subject to the restrictions which apply to the property inherited by a female (*l*).

2. The same principle is said to apply to accumulations which have been made from the income of the estate after the death, but before it reached the hands of the widow. They are treated as accretions to the body of the fund, and can only be dealt with in the same manner as the bulk of the property (*m*). Perhaps, however, the application of this rule would depend upon the amount of such savings, and the form they had assumed. If a widow was kept out of her estate for some time, and then received it with the ordinary cash balance, and current rents or interest which had accrued since the death, still uninvested, it would be difficult to say that she might not deal with these, exactly as she would have been entitled to do, if she had been let into possession at once. In any case debts or expenses, properly incurred by her while she was kept out of her income, would be a good charge upon such accumulations, just as they would have been upon the corpus (*n*).

between death
and delivery :

§ 539. The third case is the one which has caused the greatest difficulty. It is admitted that a female heir need not make any savings at all. She may spend her whole income every year, either upon herself, or by giving it away at her pleasure (*o*). But suppose she does not choose to spend her whole income, but accumulates the savings, may she dispose of these at her pleasure? If she has invested them, or purchased property with them, does it still remain at her disposal during her life? If she has not disposed of it, does

by herself.

(*l*) *Sreemutty Soorjeemoney v. Denobundo Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. 526; 9 M. I. A. 123.

(*m*) *Per Macpherson, J., Grose v. Amirtamayi Dasi*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. at p. 41; *Streemutty Rabutty v. Sibchunder Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. at p. 25.

(*n*) See cases in last note, and *per Jackson, J., Sreemutty Puddo Monee v. Dwarkanath Biswas*, 25 W. R. at p. 341.

(*o*) *Ante*, § 537.

Her right in accumulations made by herself.

it pass at her death with the rest of the property, or does it pass as her separate property to her own heirs ?

There is one case in the Privy Council where it would seem to have been distinctly laid down, that all the accumulations of a fund which had descended to a widow, from the time the estate vested in her, were absolutely her own, in her own right, as distinct from the fund itself, which she was only entitled to hold and enjoy as a widow (*p*). But in that case no question arose between the heirs of the widow and the reversioner. The point was not discussed, and the Judicial Committee has since refused to consider the ruling "as a conclusive or even a direct authority upon the question" (*q*). On the other hand, it has been decided by the High Court of Bengal, that any property which a Hindu widow has purchased out of the income of her husband's estate would be an increment to that estate, would be inalienable by her during life, and would descend at her death to her husband's heirs. To that extent the judgment was affirmed by the Privy Council to be good law (*r*). It has, however, been suggested by the Judicial Committee, that perhaps purchases made by a widow from the income of her husband's estate are not necessarily accretions to it, unless she intended them to be such ; and that such intention will be presumed in the absence of proof to the contrary, but might possibly be rebutted by evidence of a direct intention on her part to appropriate to herself, and to sever from the bulk of the estate, such purchases as she had made. It was not necessary, however, to decide the point (*s*). Finally, in a very recent case, upon a review of all the previous authorities,

(*p*) *Sreemutty Soorjeemoney v. Denobundo Mullick*, 9 M. I. A. 123.

(*q*) *Gonda Koor v. Koor Oodey Singh*, 14 B. L. R. at p. 165.

(*r*) *Chowdhry Bholanath v. Mt. Bhagabatti*, 7 B. L. R. 93, reversed on another point, *Mt. Bhagabati v. Chowdhry Bholanath*, 2 I. A. 256, acc. as to the descent of such property ; *Chundrabullee Debia v. Brody*, 9 W. R. 584 ; 5 Wym. 335, S. C. ; *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Rungunmoney*. Sev. 657, acc. as to the first point ; *Koor Oodey Singh v. Phool Chund*, 5 N. W. P. 197, 201. See too *Bissessur Chuckerbutty v. Ram Joy*, 2 W. R. 327 ; *Gobind Chunder v. Dalmeer Khan*, 23 W. R. 125, in which it was assumed that property purchased by a Hindu widow out of the proceeds of her husband's estate, or from a fund obtained by speculating with such proceeds, would pass to his heirs. Of course purchases made by her out of her own separate property are her own. But the onus of proving they are so rests on those who assert it. *Lamb v. Mt. Govindmoney*, S. D. of 1852, 125 ; 23 W. R. 125, *ut sup*.

(*s*) *Gonda Koor v. Koor Oodey Singh*, 14 B. L. R. 159.

91 ER 62
758

the High Court of Bengal held, that if a widow purchased property out of the current savings, that is out of the year's income, this would not be an irrevocable addition to the *corpus* of the estate, but might be disposed of by her at her pleasure, or sold again, and the proceeds spent as she chose. That the same rule would apply if the widow, "having no present occasion for spending monies, but foreseeing one after the lapse of a year or two, had thought it advisable to invest the money temporarily in land." They offered no opinion as to what might be her power over accumulations properly so called, or over property purchased with such accumulations. But they said, "What are accumulations in the view of these cases? Not surely the accidental balances of one or two years of the widow's income, but a fund distinct and tangible. There is nothing whatever in this case to indicate that any such fund ever had been formed or had existed; and we have no reason to suppose that accumulations had ever arisen, except that the widow may have spent in some years more, in others less, and in that sense the savings of the less costly year might be an accumulation to meet the charges of the next." (t).

Accumulations specially reserved for her own use.

Cash balances.

§ 540. None of these restrictions apply to property which has passed to a female, not as heir, but by deed or other arrangement which gives her express power to appropriate the profits. The savings of such property, and everything which is purchased out of such savings, belong absolutely to herself. They may be disposed of by herself at her pleasure, and, at her death, they pass to her representatives, and not to the heirs of the last male (u). But the mere fact that a Hindu female takes under a will or a deed of gift or arrangement, that to which she is really entitled as heiress, does not necessarily enlarge her powers. The question will still be, what estate did she take? not how did she take it (x).

Express power of disposal.

Devise or grant.

(t) *Sreemutty Puddo Money v. Dwarkanath Biswas*, 25 W. R. 335. As to purchases made by a widow with money borrowed on her own credit, or on the credit of her husband's estate, see *Kooer Oodey v. Phoolchund*, 5 N. W. P., H. C. 97.

(u) *Mt. Bhagabati v. Chowdhry Bholanath*, 2 I. A. 256; *Guru Prasad v. Nafar Das Roy*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 121; *Nellaikumar v. Marakathammal*, 1 Mad. L. R. 166.

(x) *Moolvie Mahomed v. Shewukram*, 2 I. A. 7. See *per curiam*, 2 I. A. 261,

Case of manager
differs.

§ 541. It will be observed that the right of a Hindu female to acquire a separate estate for herself out of the savings of her limited estate, stands on a completely different footing from that of a Hindu father, under the Mitâksharâ law, or the managing member of a joint Hindu family. It has been decided in such a case that all purchases made from the profits of the estate form part of it, and follow its character (*y*). But then the entire annual profits of the estate are not the property of the father or manager. The sons in the first instance, and the other members of the family in the second instance, are jointly interested in the income as well as in the principal. But in the case of the female heir the whole annual profits are hers, and until her death no vested interest comes into existence.

Religious pur-
poses.

§ 542. The purposes which authorize a Hindu widow to mortgage or sell her property are summed up by the Judicial Committee in the words already quoted (§ 536) (*z*). The same rules apply to any other female, except perhaps in Bombay. But of course it is only when the property comes to her from her husband that religious benefit to him constitutes a reason for alienation.

The primary religious purpose which a widow is bound to carry out at any expense to the estate, is the performance of the funeral obsequies of her husband, and of all ceremonies incidental to those obsequies. These are absolute necessities. There are other religious benefits procurable for him, which are more of the nature of spiritual luxuries. Pilgrimages by the widow to holy places come under this head. For these it would appear that she may dispose of a part of the estate, but that the expense which is allowable must be limited by a due regard to the entire bulk of the property, and may even be totally inadmissible, where it is not warranted by

explaining decision in *Sreemutty Rabutti v. Sibchunder Mullick*, 6 M. I. A. 1. There is no rule of Hindu law that a gift to a female should only carry with it the limited nature of a female estate by inheritance. *Mt. Kollany Koor v. Iutchmee Pershad*, 24 W. R. 395; *Sreemutty Pubitra v. Damoodhur Jana*, ib. 397.

(*y*) *Sudanund Mohapattur v. Bonomalee Doss*, 6 W. R. 256; 8 W. R. 455; 11 W. R. 436.

(*z*) See too *Raj Lukhee Dabea v. Gokool Chunder*, 13 M. I. A. 209. See 5 Wilson, 16.

the circumstances of the family (a). She may also alienate the property in order to defray the expenses of ceremonies for other members of the family, such as her husband's mother, provided they were ceremonies which he was bound to perform in his lifetime, and in the benefits of which he would participate. And it makes no difference that the ceremonies for which the outlay was incurred, would be actually performed by some other member of the family (b). But a daughter is not authorized to charge the family property in order to defray the expense of her mother's *Āraddha* (c).

Religious purposes.

Religious purposes are said to include a portion to a daughter, building temples for religious worship, digging tanks and the like (d). But it has been held that the digging of a tank would not justify a Hindu widow in alienating a portion of the property (e). So various cases are found in which gifts to Brāhmans or to idols have been supported against reversioners (f). But such alienations must be to a small extent, and would hardly be supported if they trenched materially on the property (g).

Charities.

§ 543. The obligation of a widow taking her husband's property to pay his debts comes under the head of religious benefit, unless they are contracted for immoral purposes. She is under the same obligation to discharge them as a son would be. Whether they were or were not contracted for the benefit of the estate is immaterial (h). It has, however, been held that where debts are already barred by lapse of time, she cannot burthen or dispose of the estate for their discharge (i). This seems sensible enough as a matter of

Husband's debts.

Debts barred.

(a) *Huromohun v. Sreemutty Auluckmoney*, 1 W. R. 252; *Mohammed Ushruf v. Brojessuree*, 11 B. L. R. 118; *Mutteeram Kowar v. Gopal Sahoo*, 11 B. L. R. 416; *Lukhmeram v. Kooshalee*, 1 Bor. 412; *Punjab Customs*, 60.

(b) *Choudhry Junmejoy v. Sreemutty Russomoyee*, 11 B. L. R. 418.

(c) *Raj Chunder Deb v. Shishoram*, 7 W. R. 146.

(d) *Fatwah in Cossinauth v. Hurrosundery*, in the P. C., cited V. Darp., 101; 2 M. Dig. 119.

(e) *Runjeet Ram v. Mohamed Waris*, 21 W. R. 49.

(f) *Jugjeevun v. Deoshunker*, 1 Bor. 394; *Kupoor Bhuwanee v. Sevukram*, ib. 405.

(g) *Gopaula Putter v. Naraina Putter*, Mad. Dec. of 1850, p. 74; *Choonee Lall v. Jussoo Mull*, 1 Bor. 55.

(h) *Chetty Colum Comara v. Rungasawmy*, 8 M. I. A. 319; *Goluck Chunder v. Mahomed Rohim*, 9 W. R. 316; *Cossinauth v. Hurrosoondery*, 2 M. Dig. at p. 204; *Subbaiyan v. Akhilandammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1860, p. 15; *per curiam*, 2 Bomb. L. R. 499.

(i) *Melgirappa v. Shivappa*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 270. See *Ramchurn v. Nunhoo Mundul*, 14 W. R. 147.

mundane equity, though it may be doubted whether a plea of the statute would be accepted in the Court of the Hindu Rhadamanthus.

Maintenance.

As a female heir is bound to maintain, and perform the marriages and other ceremonies of those who are a burthen on the estate, so she may mortgage or sell the property to procure the necessary funds. *A fortiori*, of course, may she do so to procure maintenance for herself (*k*), but she must wait till the necessity occurs. She must not anticipate her wants by raising money, or contracting for the discharge of such liabilities before they arise (*l*).

Necessity.

§ 544. These are some of the cases specially pointed out as authorising a woman to dispose of her inheritance. Others come under the general head of necessity. It is, of course, impossible to define what is necessity. Every case must be judged upon its own facts. A Hindu female certainly cannot have less power than the manager of a family property, and does not in this respect appear to have more. The principles laid down by the Privy Council in the well-known case of *Hanooman Persad v. Mt. Babooee Munraj Koonwar* (*m*) will equally apply to her acts. But it must be remembered, that in regard to her alienations it is not a question of absolute but of relative invalidity. She cannot, in the absence of legal necessity, bind the inheritance for her own personal debts or private purposes as against reversioners (*n*), but she can do so for her own life (*o*).

Acts good for
her own life.

§ 545. One very common case of necessity is that of a

(*k*) *Rajchunder Paramanaick v. Bulloram*, Fulton, 133; *Lalla Gunput v. Mt. Toorun Koonwar*, 16 W. R. 52.

(*l*) *Mullackkal v. Mada Chetty*, 6 Mad. Jur. 261.

(*m*) 6 M. I. A. 393; *ante*, § 300.

(*n*) *Shaik Muteeoollah v. Radhabinode Missar*, S. D. of 1856, p. 596; *Lalla Byjnath v. Bissen Beharee*, 19 W. R. 80.

(*o*) This was formerly doubted, on the ground that she had only a right of enjoyment, and that a sale which purported to be absolute, was actually void, as being a sale of that which she never possessed. 1 W. MacN. 19; 3 Dig. 465; *Ramanund v. Ram Kissen*, 2 M. Dig. 115, 118; *Gunganarain v. Bulram Bonnerjee*, 2 M. Dig. 152, 155. But the reverse is now quite settled, on the ground that the woman is absolute owner, though with limited powers. Her acts are therefore valid to the extent of her powers, though they may be exercised in excess of those powers. *Gobindmani v. Shamlal Bysack*, B. L. R. Sup. Vol. 48; *Periya Gaundan v. Ternmala Gaundan*, 1 Mad. H. C. 206; *Bhagavatamma v. Pampanna*, 2 Mad. H. C. 393; *Kamavadhani v. Joysa Narasingappa*, 3 Mad. H. C. 116; *Melgirappa v. Shivappa*, 6 Bomb. A. C. 270; *Ramchandra v. Bhimrao*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 577; *Prag Das v. Hari Kishu*, 1 All. 503.

loan of money, or a mortgage or sale of part of the property, to pay off arrears of Government revenue. In such a case it has been several times held by the Bengal Sudder Court, that it is not sufficient to show that the money was borrowed, or even required for such a purpose, without going on to show that the necessity for it arose from circumstances beyond the widow's control (*p*). The result would be, that where the estate fell into arrears through the extravagance or mismanagement of the widow, no one would venture to lend money to pay the Government claim, and the estate would be brought to the hammer. As a sale for Government arrears gives a completely new title, the result would be that not only the widow's estate, but that of the reversioners, would be forfeited (*q*). But the decision in *Hunooman Persad's* case shows, that if there is an actually existing necessity for an advance of money, the circumstance that this necessity is brought about by previous mismanagement does not vitiate the loan, unless the lender has himself been a party to the misconduct which has produced the danger (*r*). And this rule has been followed in more recent decisions. Of course it will be necessary to show that there was an actual pressure, such as an outstanding decree or impending sale, and one which the heiress had no funds capable of meeting (*s*).

Government
revenue.

Where a case of necessity exists, the heiress is not bound to borrow money, with the hope of paying it off before her death. Nor is she bound to mortgage the estate, and thereby reduce her income for life. She is at liberty, if she thinks fit, absolutely to sell off a part of the estate. And even if a mortgage would have been more beneficial, still if the heiress and the purchaser are both acting honestly, the

She may sell.

(*p*) S. D. of 1856, p. 596; S. D. of 1857, 460.

(*q*) *Ramchandra v. Bhimrav*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 577; *Douglas v. Collector of Benares*, 5 M. I. A. 271; *Nugender Chunder v. Sreemutty Kaminee*, 11 M. I. A. 241. See too sales of under-tenures under Act X of 1859; 12 W. R. 504; 15 W. R. 264, approved 2 I. A. 281, or under Bengal Act VIII of 1869; 15 B. L. R. 142.

(*r*) 6 M. I. A. p. 423.

(*s*) *Sreenath Roy v. Ruttunmalla Chowdhraïn*, S. D. of 1859, 421; *Lalla Bujnath v. Bissen Beharee*, 19 W. R. 80; *Mata Pershad v. Bhagheeruttee*, 2 N. W. P. 78.

transaction cannot be set aside at the instance of the next heir (*t*).

Consent of heirs.

§ 546. In cases which would not otherwise justify a sale by a female, the transaction will be rendered valid by the consent of the heirs. Either on the ground suggested by the Judicial Committee, that such a consent is itself an evidence of the propriety of the transaction (*u*), or because this consent operates as a release of the claims of those who might otherwise dispute the transaction. But it seems to be by no means clear who are the parties whose consent is required. The pandits in an early Supreme Court case in Bengal (*x*) stated, that a gift or a sale of the whole estate by the widow would be valid, if made "with the consent of those who are legally entitled to succeed to the estate after her death." In a later case, the Supreme Court held, that where the immediate reversioners abandoned their rights, those who claimed through them were equally bound (*y*). And in a case before the Sudder Court in 1849 the Judges seem to have been of opinion, that where the next heir, a daughter's son, consented to an alienation by a widow, this would bar the right of a more remote heir, such as an uncle's son, not claiming through him (*z*). And so it was ruled by Markby, J., who said, "To hold otherwise would only necessitate the adding of two or three words to the conveyance, because the widow may at any time surrender the property to the apparent next taker, who will then become absolute owner (*a*). The contrary decision, however, was arrived at in 1812. There the husband left a widow and two sets of heirs; the sons of his maternal uncle, who were the next in succession, and paternal kindred in a more distant degree. It was held, on the opinion of the pandits, that not only was the

(*t*) *Phoolchand v. Raghubans*, 9 W. R. 108; *Nabakumar v. Bhabasundari*, 3 B. L. R. A. C. 375.

(*u*) *Ante*, § 536. See *Madhub Chunder v. Gobind Chunder*, 9 W. R. 350, where Markby, J., appeared to think that the signature of the next heir was only material as evidence of the necessity for the transaction.

(*x*) *Ramanund v. Ram Kishen Dutt*, 2 M. Dig. 115, 119.

(*y*) *Kaleechund Dutt v. John Moore*, cited S. D. of 1856, 604; *Fulton*, 73.

(*z*) *Deep Chund v. Hurdeal Singh*, S. D. of 1849, 204.

(*a*) *Mohunt Kishen v. Basgeet Roy*, 14 W. R. 379. But *quære* whether such a conveyancing contrivance would be allowed, if the general principle as to consent would be defeated by it.

consent of all the maternal uncle's sons necessary, but that even if this consent had been given, it would have been further necessary to procure the consent of the paternal kindred. Not as heirs in reversion, but as being the legal guardians and advisers of the widow. Those, however, who did consent would be unable to claim in opposition to the deed (b). This ruling was followed by the Bengal Sudder Court in 1856, when they said, "We are of opinion from the authorities cited in the margin (c), that in order to render a sale by a Hindu widow valid it must be signed or attested by *all the heirs* of her husband then living; the execution or attestation by the nearest heirs alone is insufficient (d)." But where such a consent has been given, the transaction cannot be questioned by one who subsequently comes into existence either by birth or adoption (e).

Who must
consent.

§ 547. It must be remembered that where an estate is held by a female, no one has a vested interest in the succession. Of several persons then living, one may be the next heir in the sense that, if he lives, he will take at her death, in preference to any one else then in existence. But his claim may pass away by his own death, or be defeated by the birth or adoption of one who would be nearer than himself. It certainly does seem to be common sense, that the person who turns out to be the actual reversioner, should not find his rights signed away by the consent of one who, when he consented, had a preferable title in expectation, but who, in the actual event, proved to have no title at all. Perhaps the cases might be reconciled by holding, that no person who proved to be next heir at the death of the female tenant, and who was alive at the time of the transaction, should be bound by any consent except his own, or that of some lineal ancestor through whom he claimed. But that where the estate had once devolved on an heir who took as full owner, no subsequent reversioner should be

(b) *Mohun Lall v. Siroomunnee*, 2 S. D. 32 (40). See Nārada, cited *Dāya Bhāga*, xi. 1, § 64.

(c) 1 S. D. 261 (349); ib. 322 (431); ib. 359 (481); 2 S. D. 32 (40). Only the last touched the point.

(d) *Sheikh Muteeoollah v. Radhabinode*, S. D. of 1856, 596.

(e) *Rajkrishna Roy v. Kishoree Mohun*, 3 W. R. 14; ante, § 296.

Who must
consent.

entitled to object to a transaction to which the former had consented, or which he had ratified. I should think that the Court would never require the assent of more remote kinsmen, who had no interest as heirs.

Evidence of
consent.

§ 548. Consent by signature or attestation is spoken of. But, of course, this is only one of many modes by which it is evidenced. Presence at, or knowledge of, the transaction, followed by acquiescence, express or implied, would be just as effective, though less easily proved than consent given in writing (*f*). In Malabar consent of all the members of the *tarwâd* is necessary to a sale, but no written consent is required. The signature of the chief *anandraven* or member of the family, who is next in seniority to the *karnaven* or manager, is not necessary, but if given it is *primâ facie* evidence of the assent of all who are interested in the property. If they did not in fact consent they are bound to prove their dissent (*g*).

Onus of proof.

§ 549. In this, as in all other cases, when a person deals with a qualified owner, he must prove the facts, either of purpose or consent, upon which he relies as giving validity to the transaction. But the amount of proof may vary considerably, according as he is the immediate party to the transaction, or only the representative of such party, and according to the lapse of time that has taken place, and other similar circumstances. And if he once proves the existence of a debt, which would justify the transaction, its continuance will be assumed, unless the person who contests the transaction shows sufficient cause for assuming that it was satisfied (*h*). Nor is he bound to prove that the facts were actually as they were represented to him, provided he made *bonâ fide* and proper enquiry, and such facts were represented to him as would, if true, have justified the transaction (*i*.) Nor is he in any case bound to see to the

(*f*) S. D. of 1856, 596; *Mohesh Chunder v. Ugra Kant*, 24 W. R. 127.

(*g*) *Kondi Menon v. Sranjinreagatta*, 1 Mad. H. C. 248; *Kaipreta Ramen v. Makkaiyil*, ib. 359; *Koyiloth Putten v. Puthenpurayil*, 3 Mad. H. C. 294.

(*h*) *Hanooman Persad's case*, 6 M. I. A. 393; *C. V. Narainapah v. Collector of Masulipatam*, 11 M. I. A. 619; *Raj Lukhee Dabeea v. Gokool Chunder*, 13 M. I. A. 209; *Rao Kurun Singh v. Nawab Mahomed*, 14 M. I. A. 187.

(*i*) *Hanooman Persad's case*, *ubi sup*.

application of the money (*j*). But the mere statement in a document that it was executed for a particular purpose is not sufficient evidence either of the existence of the purpose or of the adequacy of the enquiry (*k*).

§ 550. A sale in execution of a decree against a female heir is merely an involuntary alienation, and will be judged of by the previous principles. Where the suit is founded upon a purely personal debt or contract of her own, the decree can only be against her own person and property, and a sale in execution will only convey her own interest in the property. But even though the foundation of the decree be a liability which might bind the reversioners, that alone is not sufficient. The suit must be so framed as to show that it is not merely a personal demand upon the female in possession, but that it is intended to bind the entire estate, and the interests of all those who come after her. The reason of this is, that although in a suit brought to recover or charge an estate of which a Hindu female is the proprietress, she will, as defendant, represent and protect the estate, as well in respect of her own as of the reversionary interest; still, and on this very account, the plaintiff is bound to give notice that he is seeking so large a remedy, in order to put those who may be ultimately affected upon their guard, and to enable them to protect themselves (*l*). If, therefore, the suit is framed so as only to claim a personal decree against the heiress, the plaintiff will be relieved from the necessity of proving anything beyond her personal liability. But then the decree can only be executed against the female holder personally, and against her limited interest in the land (*m*).

Effect of execution for debt of female.

§ 551. A different case is where the proceeding is nominally against the heiress, but is really against her merely as

As representing estate.

(*j*) *Hanooman Persad's case*, *ubi sup.*; *Ram Pershad v. Mt. Nagbunghshee*, 9 W. R. 501.

(*k*) *Sunker Lall v. Judoobuns*, 9 W. R. 285. See *ante*, § 303, *et seq.*

(*l*) See 11 M. I. A. 267; *post*, § 559. The language of the Court here, and at 15 B. L. R. 160, would suggest that the reversioners must be parties to a suit framed for this purpose, *sed quare*. They would certainly be entitled to come in and ask to be made parties, and of course it would be safer to include them from the first, if ascertainable.

(*m*) *Nugender Chunder v. Streemutty Kaminee*, 11 M. I. A. 241; *Baijun Doobey v. Brij Bhookun*, 2 I. A. 275; *Mohima Chunder v. Ram Kishore*, 15 B. L. R. 142; *Kisto Moyee v. Prosunno*, 6 W. R. 304. See *Venkataramaiyan v. Venkatasubramania*, 1 Mad. L. R. 358.

Execution for
debt of last male
holder.

representing the estate, that is, where the debt on which the decree is founded was not her own at all, but was the debt of the last male holder. Here again there is a distinction, according as the decree was passed in the life of the male holder, and against him, or not. In the former case, if execution has not been taken out during his life it may be taken out after his death against any property which he may have left behind. No matter into whose hands such property has passed (*n*), the property seized and sold will be described as the property of the deceased, and the entire interest in it will pass by the sale. But if no decree has been passed against him before his death, it is necessary to bring or revive the suit against his representative, whether male or female. "In such cases the representative, and not the deceased, is the defendant; and in the notification of sale, and in the certificate of sale, it ought to be set forth that what is sold is the right title and interest of the representative on the record, and not that of the deceased person. As the whole estate of the deceased vests in his legal representative, the purchaser would be safe if the representative on the record were really the legal representative. But on this point he would be bound to satisfy himself, and must take the consequences if it turned out to be otherwise (*o*)."

Therefore where the deceased was divided, and therefore represented by his widow, but the suit was brought against his divided brother; and, conversely, where the deceased was undivided, and the suit was brought against his widow, and not against his brothers, in each case it was held that nothing passed to the purchaser at an auction sale under the decree (*p*). But where the estate is actually represented by a female, and the suit is properly brought against her upon a debt of the last male holder, no liability can possibly attach upon her personally. The basis of the suit against her is, that the estate which she holds is bound, and that she is compellable to pay, not out of her

(*n*) See *ante*, § 283, as to the effect of a gift or devise upon the right of a creditor.

(*o*) *Per curiam*, 8 Bomb. 41.

(*p*) *Natha Hari v. Jamma*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 37; *Sadaburt v. Foolbush Kooer*, 3 B. L. R., F. B. 31; *Mt. Phoolbas v. Lalla Jogeshur*, 3 I. A. 7. See *Hendry v. Mutty Lal*, 2 Calc. 395.

assets, but out of *the* assets. Consequently any decree against her, and all proceedings in execution of it, will be interpreted so as to give proper effect to the transaction. For instance, a man had given a bond, and died leaving an infant son, and a widow who was guardian of the son. She was sued on the bond, judgment was given against her, and execution was issued. The advertisement stated that the property was hers, and that the rights and interest of the debtor were to be sold. It was held that the estate of the deceased was what was sold, and that the purchaser had a good title against the son (*q*). This decision was approved and followed by the Privy Council, in a case where a widow was sued for arrears of rent, which accrued due in the time of the husband. The plaintiff had, according to the practice which then existed, obtained a decree in the Civil Court against the husband for the arrears. He then proceeded against the widow in the Collector's Court to enforce payment from the estate. The decree was given against the widow as sole heiress and representative. It was held that the execution of this decree bound all the interests in the property, and not merely that of the widow (*r*). And where the advertisement of sale points to a decree against the husband as that which is being enforced, it is immaterial that it states that what is being sold is the right title and interest of the widow (*s*).

Binds estate of deceased.

§ 552. The self-acquired property of a man will descend to his widow where his joint or ancestral property would not do so. But she has no other or greater power over the one than over the other (*t*). A different rule prevails among the Jains. A widow among them is said to have an absolute interest over her husband's self-acquired property. And apparently, if not an absolute, yet a very much larger

Her power over self-acquisitions.

Jains.

(*q*) *Ishan Chunder v. Buksh Ali*, Marsh. 614. See *Alukmonee v. Banee Madhab*, 4 Calc., 677.

(*r*) *Durbunga v. Coomar Ramaput*, 14 M. I. A. 605. The effect of this and the preceding decisions has lately been stated by the Judicial Committee to be "that in execution proceedings, the Court will look at the substance of the transaction, and will not be disposed to set aside the execution upon mere technical grounds when they find that it is substantially right." *Bissessur Lal v. Luchmessur Singh*, 6 I. A., 233, 238.

(*s*) *Mt. Nuzceerum v. Moolvie Ameeroodden*, 24 W. R. 3.

(*t*) *Mt. Thakoor Deyhee v. Rai Baluk Ram*, 11 M. I. A. 139.

interest over his ancestral property than an ordinary widow possesses (u).

Her power over
movables.

Power of heiress
over movables.

§ 553. Another point on which there appears to be much difference of opinion, is whether a widow or other female heir has any larger power of disposition over movable property than over immovable property. It is now finally settled, as regards cases governed by the law of Bengal and Benares, that there is no difference, and that the same restrictions apply in each case (v). But in both these decisions, and in that cited above, *Mt. Thakoor Deyhee v. Rai Baluk Ram*, it was admitted by the Judicial Committee that there might be a difference in this respect between the law of those provinces, and that administered in the Mithilâ and in Western and Southern India. Certainly as regards these latter districts there is a strong current of authority the other way (w). It is difficult to ascertain upon what ground these decisions rested. Most of them were given in accordance with *futwahs* which set out no reasons or authority. Whenever the question arises for final decision, it will be well to bear in mind the observations of the Judicial Committee in 11 M. I. A. 510-514. These show that the texts which authorise a woman to dispose absolutely of movable property given to her by her husband, are different from those which control her disposition of property inherited, and that she may probably have larger powers over the former than over the latter. Also, that reliance can no longer be placed upon the much canvassed text of the *Mitâksharâ* (ii. 11, § 2), as raising any analogy between property inherited by a woman and her *strîdhanum*, as regards the right to dispose of it.

(u) *Sheo Singh v. Mt. Dakho*, 6 N. W. P. 382; 5 I. A. 87.

(v) *Cossinath Bysack v. Hurrosoondery*, 2 M. Dig. 198; affirmed in P. C. Clarke, Rules, 91; V. Darp. 97; *Bhugwandeem Doobey v. Myna Bae*, 11 M. I. A. 487.

(w) See as to the Mithilâ, *Vivâda Chintâmani*, 261—263; *Sreenarain Rai v. Bhaya Jha*, 2 S. D. 23 (29, 36); *Doorga Dayee v. Poorun Dayee*, 5 W. R. 141. Madras: *Madhaviya*, § 44; *Ramasashien v. Akylandammal*, Mad. Dec. of 1849, 115; *Gooroobuksh v. Lutchmana Prasad*, ib. 1850, 61; *Gopala Putter v. Naraina Putter*, ib. 74; *Cooppa Joseyer v. Sashappien*, ib. 1858, 220. Bombay: V May., iv. 8, § 3; *Bechur Bhugwan v. Bae Lukmee*, 1 Bomb. 56; *Dewcooverbae's case*, 1 Bomb. 120; *Jamiyatram v. Bai Jamna*, 2 Bomb. 10; *Lakshmibai v. Ganpat Moroba*, 4 Bomb. O. C. 150, 162; *Bhaskar Trimbak v. Mahadev Ramji*, 6 Bomb. O. C. 1, 13.

§ 554. REMEDIES AGAINST THE ACTS OF A FEMALE HEIR.— Remedies.

This part of the subject divides itself into three branches—Who may sue, for what they may sue, and the equities that arise in giving relief.

WHO MAY SUE.—No one can sue in respect of the acts of the female proprietor, except those who have an interest in the succession, and who would be injured by the acts complained of. It is quite clear that a mere stranger cannot sue. And he is not put into a better position by joining the reversionary heirs as defendants, or even by obtaining their consent (x). But the further question arises, who is a mere stranger? The next reversioner, that is the presumptive heir in succession, has only a contingent estate. But it is settled that this estate gives him such an interest as will justify a suit, where that interest is in danger (y). On the other hand it seems equally settled that only the immediate reversioners can bring such a suit (z), unless the reversioners are themselves fraudulently colluding with the female heir, so that their protection of the estate is in fact withdrawn (a).

Persons interested.

Suit by reversioners.

§ 555. FOR WHAT THEY MAY SUE.—Of course an action against the heir in possession is only maintainable in respect of some act of hers which is injurious to the reversioner. Such acts are of two classes, *First*, those which diminish the value of the estate; *Second*, those which endanger the title of those next in succession.

First.—Under this head come all acts which answer to the description of waste, that is, an improper destruction or deterioration of the substance of the property. The right of those

To restrain waste.

(x) *Brojokishoree v. Sreenath Bose*, 9 W. R. 463. Nor can the assignee of a reversioner's right sue, even though he would be the next reversioner after the assignor; *Raicharan Pal v. Pyari Mani*, 3 B. L. R., O. C. 70. *Sed qy.* as to last position? If assignment valid he became next reversioner. See *Ammur Singh v. Mardun Singh*, 2 N. W. P. 31.

(y) *Raj Lukhee Dabea v. Gokool Chunder*, 13 M. I. A. 209, 224; *Kooer Goolab Singh v. Rao Kurun Singh*, 14 M. I. A. 176; *Jamoon Dassya v. Bamasoonderai*, 3 I. A. 72.

(z) *Gogunchunder v. Joy Durga*, S. D. of 1859, 620; *Brojo Kishoree v. Sreenath Bose*, 9 W. R. 463; *Bamasoonduree v. Bamasoonduree*, 10 W. R. 301; but see *Oojulmoney v. Sagormoney*, Tayl. & B. 370.

(a) *Naikram Lall v. Soorujbuns Sahee*, S. D. of 1859, 891; *Shama Soon-duree v. Jamoon Choudhrai*, 24 W. R. 86; *Retoo Raj Pandey v. Lalljee Pandey*, ib. 399; *Kooer Goolab Singh v. Rao Kurun Singh*, 14 M. I. A. 176. 193.

Waste by heiress
in possession.

next in reversion to bring a suit to restrain such waste, was established, apparently for the first time, by an elaborate judgment of Sir L. Peel, C. J., in 1851 (*b*). What will amount to waste, has never been discussed. Probably no assistance upon this point could be obtained from an examination of the English cases in regard to tenants for life. The female heir is, for all purposes of beneficial enjoyment, full and complete owner. She would, as I conceive, have a full right to cut timber, open mines and the like, provided she did so for the purpose of enjoying the estate, and not of injuring the reversion. As Sir L. Peel said (*c*), "The Hindu female is rather in the position of an heir taking by descent until a contingency happens, than an heir or devisee upon a trust by implication. Therefore a bill filed by the presumptive heir in succession against the immediate heir who has succeeded by inheritance, must show a case approaching to spoliation." She must appear not merely to be using, but to be abusing, her estate. Therefore specific acts of waste, or of mismanagement, or other misconduct, must be alleged and proved. Unless this is done, the female heir can neither be prevented from getting the property into her possession, nor from retaining it in her hands, nor compelled to give security for it, nor can any orders be given her by anticipation as to the mode in which she is to use or invest it (*d*). But where such a case is made out, the heiress will be restrained from the act complained of. In a very gross case, she may even be deprived of the management of the estate, and a receiver appointed. Not upon the ground that her act operates as a complete forfeiture, which lets in the next estate, and entitles the reversioner to sue for immediate possession, as if she were actually dead (*e*), but upon the ground that she cannot be trusted to deal with the estate in a manner consistent with her limited rights in it (*f*). In such a case the

(*b*) *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Rungunmoney*, Sev. 657.

(*c*) *Ibid.* 661.

(*d*) *Hurrydoss Dutt v. Sreemutty Uppurnah*, 6 M. I. A. 433; *Bindoo Bassinee v. Bolie Chand*, 1 W. R. 125; *Grose v. Amirtamayi Dasi*, 4 B. L. R., O. C. 1.

(*e*) *Per curiam*, 14 M. I. A. 198; *Mt. Kishnee v. Khealee Ram*, 2 N. W. P. 424.

(*f*) *Nundlal v. Bolakee Rebee*, S. D. of 1854, 351; *Gouree Kanth v. Bhugobutty Dossee*, S. D. of 1858, 1103.

next heirs may be, but need not necessarily be, appointed the receivers, unless they appear to be the fittest persons to manage for the benefit of the estate (*g*); and the Court will, unless perhaps in a case where the female has been guilty of criminal fraud, direct the whole proceeds to be paid over to her, and not merely an allowance for her maintenance (*h*). In one case the widow had given up the estate to a third party, under threat of legal proceedings, and refused to have anything to do with the assets. It was held that the reversioners might sue the widow and the third party to have the possession restored to the proper custody, and that a manager should be appointed to collect, account for, and pay into Court the assets, to be held for the ultimate benefit of the heirs who should be entitled to succeed at the death of the widow (*i*).

Abandonment
of right.

Of course the reversioners will be equally entitled to restrain the unlawful acts of persons holding under the female heiress (*j*). But the mere fact that strangers are affecting to deal with the property as their own, without actual dispossession of the intermediate estate, or waste, or injury to it, gives no right of action against them to the reversioner, either for a declaration of title, or otherwise (*k*).

Acts of
strangers.

§ 556. *Second*.—During the lifetime of the heiress no one can bring a suit to have it declared that he will be the next heir at her death. Because as his title must depend upon the state of things existing at her death, a suit before that time would be an unnecessary and useless litigation of a question which may never arise, or may only arise in a different form (*l*). But he may sue to remove that which would be a bar to his title when it vested in possession.

Declaratory
suits

(*g*) *Goluckmoney v. Kishenpershad*, S. D. of 1859, 210.

(*h*) S. D. of 1854, p. 351; S. D. of 1859, 210; *Mt. Lodhoomana v. Guneschunder*, S. D. of 1859, 436; *Korunamoyee v. Gobindnath Roy*, S. D. of 1859, 944; *Mt. Maharani v. Nanda Lal*, 1 B. L. R., A. C. 27; *Shama Soonduree v. Jumoona Chowdhraïn*, 24 W. R. 86.

(*i*) *Radha Mohun v. Ram Dass*, 24 W. R. 86, n.; 3 B. L. R. 362. See *Joy-mooruth Kooer v. Buldeo Singh*, 21 W. R. 444.

(*j*) *Gobindmani v. Shamlal Bysak*, B. L. R., Sup. Vol. 48; *per curiam*, 3 Mad. H. C. 119.

(*k*) *Mt. Suraj Bansi Kunwar v. Mahipat Singh*, 7 B. L. R. 669.

(*l*) *Pranputty Kooer v. Lallah Futteh*, 2 Hay, 608; Sev. 638; *Katama Nachiar v. Dorasinga Tevar*, 2 I. A. 169.

There are two classes of transactions which would have this effect : first, adoptions ; second, alienations.

to set aside
adoptions.

§ 557. It was ruled under the Limitation Act XIV of 1859, that the mere fact of an adoption was no necessary injury to a reversioner, until his right to possession arises, and that the Statute of Limitations ran from the latter date, and not from the date of the adoption. And under the new Act XV of 1877, sched. ii., § 118-140-141, this seems still to be the case unless where a declaration that the adoption is invalid is sought for (*m*). But in any case it was settled that the next reversioner might bring a suit for a declaration that the adoption was invalid, on the ground that he might otherwise lose the evidence which would establish its invalidity, when the occasion arose (*n*). But the granting of merely declaratory decrees is discretionary (*o*), and in one case where the evidence was unsatisfactory, the Court refused to make any declaration (*p*). And no declaration will be made as to merely collateral matters, such as the existence of agreements to give or receive in adoption, where the declaration, when made, would not affect the validity of the adoption (*q*).

Declaratory
suits

to set aside
alienations.

§ 558. It was at one time thought that alienations by a widow beyond her powers were absolutely void, and even operated as a forfeiture of her estate. Consequently that the reversioners might sue to have the estate restored to the widow, or even placed at once in their own possession. It is now, however, settled that this is not the case. Such an alienation will be valid during the widow's lifetime. If not made for a lawful purpose, such as will bind the heirs, it has no effect against them till their title accrues ; they may then sue for possession, and the Statute will run from that

(*m*) See *ante*, § 145.

(*n*) *Chunder Koomar v. Dwarkanath Purdhan*, S. D. of 1859, 1623 ; *Nobinkishory v. Gobind Chunder*, Sev. 628, n. ; *per curiam*, 4 B. L. R., F. B. 9 ; *Brojo Kishoree Sreenath Bhose*, 9 W. R. 463 ; *Mrinmoyee Dabea v. Bhoobunmoyee*, 15 B. L. R. 1 ; *Siddhessur Dutt v. Sham Chand*, 15 B. L. R. 9, n. (See as to Statute of Limitations in these two last cases) *Kotomarti Sitaramaya v. K. Vardhanamma*, 7 Mad H. C. 351 ; *Kalova v. Padapa*, 1 Bomb. L. R. 248 ; *Jumoona Dassya v. Bamasoonderai*, 3 I. A. 72.

(*o*) 11 B. L. R. 171, 190 ; *Motee Lal v. Bhoop Singh*, 8 W. R. 64 ; *Brojo Kishoree v. Sreenath Bhose*, 9 W. R. 463.

(*p*) *Brohmo Moyee v. Anund Lall*, 19 W. R. 419.

(*q*) *Sree Narrain Mitter v. Sreemutty Kishen*, 11 B. L. R. (P. C.) 171.

date (r). But here, as in the case of adoptions, the validity of the transaction may depend upon facts the evidence of which would be lost by delay. Therefore a suit will lie by the reversioner at once, not to set aside the transaction absolutely, but to set aside so much of it as would operate against himself (s). But a suit of this character must be founded on specific instances of alienation extending beyond the restricted powers of the heiress. A suit to restrain all alienations would not be maintainable, because the validity of each alienation would depend upon the circumstances under which it was made, and could not be decided upon beforehand (t). Such declarations will not be granted, unless the act complained of is one which, if allowed to stand unchallenged, would be an injury to the estate of the next heir (u). And they may be refused, at the discretion of the Court, if it appears that the lapse of time will not render it more difficult for the next heir to establish his right when the succession falls in, for, if this be so, the litigation is premature and unnecessary (v).

When maintainable.

§ 559. It was formerly unsettled how far a decree in a declaratory suit would bind any but the parties to it. Where a suit is brought by or against a female heiress in possession, in respect of any matter which strikes at the root of her title to the property, it is held that a decree, fairly and properly obtained against her, binds all the reversioners, because she completely represents the estate (w). But it is by no means

Effect of declaratory decree.

(r) Where the suit is during the life of a widow to declare her alienation void beyond her life, the statute runs from the alienation. If after her death for possession, the statute runs from the death. In each case the period is twelve years. Act IX of 1871, sched. ii. § 124, 142.

(s) *Gobindmani Dasi v. Shamlal Bysak*, B. L. R., Sup. Vol. 48 (Sp. No. W. R. 165 S. C.); *Oodoy Chund Jha v. Dhunmonee Debia*, 3 W. R. 183; *Grose v. Amirtamayi Dasi*, 4 B. L. R. O. C. 1; *Shewak Ram v. Syed Moham-med*, 3 B. L. R., A. C. 196; *Lallah Chuttur v. Mt. Wooma Koonwaree*, 8 W. R. 273; *Bykunt Nath v. Grish Chunder*, 15 W. R. 96; *Bisto Beharee v. Lalla Byjnath*, 16 W. R. 49; *Damoodhur Surmah v. Mohee Kanth*, 21 W. R. 54. See per Macpherson, J., 24 W. R. 88, explaining *Brinda Dabee v. Pearee Lall*, 9 W. R. 460; *Mahomed Shumsool v. Shewukram*, 2 I. A. 7. Such a suit may be brought by a person who is a reversioner, though he is not the next in expectation. *Gauri Dat v. Gur Sahai*, 2 All. 41.

(t) *Pranputtee Koonwur v. Mt. Pooran Koonwur*, S. D. of 1856, 494; S. D. of 1857, 381.

(u) *Sreenarrain Mitter v. Sreemutty Kishen*, 11 B. L. R. 171 (P. C.) *Behari Lall v. Madho Lall*, 13 B. L. R. 222; *Nilmony v. Kally Churn*, 2 I. A. 83.

(v) *Behari Lall v. Madho Lall*, *ib. sup.*

(w) *Katama Nachiar v. Shivagunga*, 9 M. I. A. 539, 604; *Nobinchunder*

clear that the same result would follow in a suit where she was not defending her own title at all. And in a recent case of an application to set aside an adoption, the Judicial Committee said that they would give no opinion what the effect of a decree in such a suit might be; whether one in favour of the adoption would bind any reversioner except the plaintiff, or whether one adverse to the adoption would bind the adopted son, as between himself and anybody except the plaintiff (y). Now by Act I of 1877, s. 43 it is provided, that a declaration made under Chap. VI is binding only upon the parties to the suit, persons claiming under them respectively, and, where any of the parties are trustees, on the persons for whom, if in existence at the date of the declaration, such persons would be trustees.

Equities on setting aside her acts.

§ 560. EQUITIES.—In general, where a conflict arises between the reversioner and the alienee of the heiress, the question is simply whether her alienation was for a lawful and necessary purpose, or not. If it was, it binds him; if it was not, it does not bind him. In either view no equity can arise between them. And when the sale is valid, the reversioner is not at liberty to treat it as a mere mortgage, and to set it aside on payment of the amount which it was proved that the female in possession had been under a necessity to raise (z). But in some cases the reversioner is at liberty to set aside the transaction, but only on special terms. For instance, if the heiress sold a larger portion of the estate than was necessary to raise the amount which the law authorized her to raise, the sale would not be absolutely void as against the reversioners, but they could only set it aside (if at all) upon paying the amount which the widow was authorised to raise, with interest from her death, the defendant accounting for rents and profits from the same period (a).

Excessive sale.

Chuckerbutty v. Guru Persad, B. L. R., Sup. Vol. 1008. As to effect of Statute of Limitations, affirmed *Aumirtolall Bose v. Rajoneekant Mitter*, 2 I. A. 113, 121; *Natha Hari v. Jamni*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 37; *Brammoyee v. Kristomohun*, 2 Cal., 222; *Nandkumar v. Radha Kuari*, 1 All. 282; ante, § 550.

(y) *Jumona Dassya v. Bamasoondery*, 2 I. A. 72, 84. See per Peacock, C.J., 9 W. R. 465; per Markby, J., 19 W. R. 420.

(z) *Sugeeram v. Judoobuns Suhaye*, 9 W. R. 284.

(a) *Phool Chand v. Rughoobuns*, 9 W. R. 108; *Mutteeram Kowar v. Gopal Sahoe*, 11 B. L. R. 416.

And it is probable that even this amount of relief would not be granted, unless the circumstances were such as to effect the purchaser with notice that the sale was in excess of the legal requirements of the case (b) ; or unless it was shown that he had failed to make proper enquiries upon the point (c).

§ 561. On the other hand, where the female heiress has sold property in order to pay off a mortgage on the estate, if it appears that her funds were sufficient to have enabled her to satisfy it without alienating the property, the sale will be set aside at the suit of the reversioners. But only on the terms of treating the mortgage as a subsisting debt, and giving the purchaser credit for the amount, which otherwise the heir would have had to meet (d). Here, it will be observed, the heiress might, without any breach of duty, have allowed the mortgage to continue, leaving the reversioner to pay it off or not, as he thought best. But I do not imagine the same rule would be applied, if the widow sold the estate, without any necessity, to pay off claims which she herself was bound to meet, such as her husband's debts, or the maintenance or marriages of dependent members of the family ; for the result of such a course would be, to shift the burthen of these claims off her own shoulders upon those of the reversioner.

In discharge of mortgage.

(b) *Kamikha Prasad Roy v. Srimati Jagadamba*, 5 B. L. R. 508.

(c) *Lulleet Pandey v. Sreedhur Deo*, 13 W. R. 457.

(d) *Mahomed Shumsool v. Shewukram*, 2 I. A. 7.

CHAPTER XXI.

WOMAN'S ESTATE.

In Property not inherited from Males.

Woman's
peculium.

§ 562. THIS Chapter will be devoted to a discussion of that which is generally spoken of as *strīdhanum*, or woman's *peculium*, or property specially so called. But I have preferred the more general heading, so as to avoid disputes as to whether any particular species of property comes within the definitions of *strīdhanum* or not. Such an enquiry is frequently no more than a dispute about words (a). To the historical or practical lawyer the only question of interest is, what are the incidents of any sort of property. Its name is a matter of indifference, unless so far as that name guides us in ascertaining the incidents. If the name itself has been applied to different things at different times, it is more likely to mislead than to guide (b).

Its origin and
growth.

§ 563. It is evident that the recognition of any right of property in women must have been of gradual growth. In every race there has been a time when woman herself is no more than a chattel, and incapable of any property except what her owner allows her to possess, and so long as he allows it. Indications of such a state of society have already been pointed out in the Sanskrit texts (§ 69). Dr. Mayr adduces passages from the Veda to show that in early times married women pursued independent occupations, and acquired gain by them (c), but both Manu and Kātyāyana assert that their earnings were absolutely

(a) See *per Holloway, J.*, 6 Mad. H. C. 340.

(b) The whole subject of *strīdhanum* is very elaborately discussed by Dr. Mayr (pp. 164—179). I have borrowed much from him throughout this chapter. and not merely in passages where there is a special reference to his work.

(c) Mayr, 162.

at the disposal of the man to whom they belonged (*d*). The simplicity of a Hindu household would limit a woman's possessions to her own clothes and ornaments, and perhaps some domestic utensils. Her husband, if he chose, might recognize her right to these, but it would seem that in early times this right ended with his life. That is to say, as soon as he died, the dominion over her passed to others, and with it the power of appropriating her property. Vishṇu says, "those ornaments which the wives usually wear should not be divided by the heirs, whilst the husbands of such wives are alive." Messrs. West and Bühler add in a note, "But the ornaments of widows may be divided. The latter point is especially mentioned by Nanda Paṇḍita" (*e*). The same text apparently is found in Manu, where it is slightly altered, so as to prohibit the husband's heirs from taking the property of a woman even after the husband's death. This is the meaning put upon it in the Mitāksharâ, and no doubt was a later phase of law (*f*). In accordance with it is the remark of Āpastamba, "According to some the share of the wife consists of her ornaments, and the wealth which she may have received from her relations" (*g*). That is to say, an after usage sprang up of recognizing the right of the woman, by formally allotting her special property to her upon a family division. It would be a still further advance to separate her property completely from that of her husband, by making it pass after her death in a different line of descent.

Her paraphernalia.

§ 564. Infant marriage is so universal in India that a girl, even in a wealthy family, would seldom possess ornaments of any value before betrothal. For her, property would commence at her bridal, in the shape of gifts from her bridegroom and her own family. Gifts of the former kind were probably the earlier in point of time. The bride-price in all its varied forms, as a bribe before marriage, or a reward immediately after it; as a payment to the parents, or a dowry for the wife, is one of the earliest elements in

The bride-price.

(*d*) Manu, viii. § 416; Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 19.

(*e*) Vishṇu, xvii. § 22, as explained by his commentator Vaijayanṭi.

(*f*) Manu, ix. § 200; Mitāksharâ, ii. 11, § 33; Mayr, 164.

(*g*) Āpastamba, ii. 14, § 9.

Gifts to wife. every marriage which has passed beyond the stage of pure capture (*h*). Gifts by the girl's own family pre-suppose that consent, which was only asked for when the parental dominion was recognized (§ 76). But they do not necessarily involve the idea that her right to separate property had yet arisen. Dr. Mayr suggests that when the husband's relations began to make gifts to her, such a separate capacity for property must have been recognized, and therefore that gifts of this class are later in point of origin than the others (*i*). For obvious reasons gifts from strangers, or persons beyond the limit of very close relationship, would not be encouraged, and, if permitted, would pass to the husband. Similarly, any earnings made by the wife could only be made by the permission of the husband, and as a reward for services which she could otherwise be rendering in his family. They also would be his, not hers.

Early texts as to
strīdhanum.

§ 565. The texts in regard to *strīdhanum* accord with the above views. The principal definition is that contained in Manu, "What was given before the nuptial fire (*adhyagni*), what was given on the bridal procession, what was given in token of love (*dattam prīti-karmani*), and what was received from a brother, a mother, or a father, are considered as the six-fold (separate) property of a (married) woman" (*k*). The words "a brother, a mother, or a father," appear to be given only by way of illustration, for he says in the next verse, "What she received after marriage (*anvādheyam*) from the family of her husband, and what her affectionate lord may have given her, shall be inherited, even if she die in his lifetime, by his children" (*l*). Vishṇu and Yājñavalkya give a similar enumeration, but both add, that which a woman receives when her husband takes another wife. Vishṇu

(*h*) Maine, Early Instit. 324 ; Mayr, 168 ; *ante*, § 77.

(*i*) Mayr, 169.

(*k*) Manu. ix. § 194. Nārada gives the same definition (xiii. § 8), substituting for "a token of love," "her husband's donation." The Dāya Bhāga, (iv. 1, § 7) observes that this does not include the heritage of her husband. See as to *strīdhanum* generally, Mitāksharā, ii. 11 ; V. Mayr., iv. 10 ; Smṛiti Chandrikā, ix. ; Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1 ; D. K. S. ii. 2 ; Viramitrodaya ; W. & B. 495 ; Mādhaviya, § 50 ; Varadrājah, 45 ; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 256. The term "given before the nuptial fire," includes all gifts during the continuance of the marriage ceremonies. *Bistoo Pershad v. Radha Soonder*, 16 W. R. 115.

(*l*) *Ib.* § 195.

substitutes the term *ṣulka* or fee for the "gift in token of love;" and Yājñavalkya terminates his list with the mysterious *ādyam*, or &c., which Vijñaneśvara expands into, "And also property which she may have acquired by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure, and finding" (*m*).

§ 566. It will be observed that these various classes of property have all these qualities in common, that they belong to a married woman, that they are given to her in her capacity of bride or wife, and that, except perhaps in the case of purely bridal gifts, they are given by her husband, or by her relations, or by his relations. Jīmûta Vâhana expressly limits gifts presented in the bridal procession, to such as are received from the family of either her father or mother. In this Jagannâtha differs from him, being of opinion that gifts received from any one would come within the definition, and a *futwah* to the same effect is recorded by Mr. W. MacNaghten (*n*). It is probable that in early times strangers to the family did not take part in family ceremonies. The *ṣulka* or fee is variously described, as being a special present to the bride to induce her to go cheerfully to the mansion of her lord (*o*), or as the gratuity for the receipt of which a girl is given in marriage (*p*). Varadrâjah puts the latter view even more coarsely, when he describes it as, "What is given to the possessors of a maiden by way of price for the sale of a maiden" (*q*). In the *Vîramitrodaya* it is stated to be, "the value of household utensils and the like which is taken (by the parents) from the bridegroom, and the rest, in the shape of ornaments for the girl" (*r*). These various meanings probably mark the different steps, by which that which was originally received by the parents for the sale of their daughter, was converted into a dowry for herself (*s*). A still later signification was given to the word, when it was taken to denote special presents given by the husband to the

Essentials of
strîdhanum.

Ṣulka.

(*m*) Vishnu, xvii. § 18; Yājñavalkya, ii. § 143, 144; Mitāksharâ, ii. 11, § 2. See also Kātyâyana, Mitāksharâ, ii. 11, § 5; Devala, Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 15. See *ante*, § 524.

(*n*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 6; 3 Dig. 559; 2 W. MacN. 122.

(*o*) Vyāsa, 3 Dig. 570; Dāya Bhāga, iv. 3, § 21.

(*p*) Mitāksharâ, ii. 11, § 6.

(*q*) Varadrâjah, 48.

(*r*) W. & B. 500.

(*s*) Mayr, 170; *ante*, § 77.

wife for the discharge of extra household duties (*t*), or even presents given to her by strangers for the exercise of her influence with her husband or her family (*u*).

Maiden's
property.

Of course an unmarried woman might have property, either in the shape of ornaments or other presents, given to her by her affianced bridegroom, or by her own family, or property which she had inherited from others than males. The former class of property is expressly recognized as *strīdhanum*, and goes in a peculiar course of descent (*x*). And in Bengal, property devised by a father to his daughter before her marriage has been held to be her *strīdhanum*, and descendible as such (*y*). Her property inherited will be treated of hereafter (§ 581).

Yautaka,
Ayautaka.

Saudāyika.

§ 567. Before quitting this branch of the subject it is necessary to explain two terms which are frequently used in regard to *strīdhanum*; that is, *Saudāyika* and *Yautaka*, with its negative *Ayautaka*. *Yautaka* refers exclusively to gifts received at the time of the marriage (*z*). *Ayautaka* of course is that which does not come within the term *yautaka*. *Saudāyika* is translated as "the gift of affectionate kindred." The author of the *Smṛiti Chandrikā* limits it to wealth "received by a woman from her own parents or persons connected with them in the house of either her father or her husband, from the time of her betrothment to the completion of the ceremony to be performed on the occasion of her entering her lord's house" (*a*). But the same texts of *Kātyāyana* and *Vyāsa*, upon which he places this interpretation, are explained by others as including gifts received by her from her husband, and from others after her marriage (*b*). The modern *futwahs* and decisions take the same view. Provided the gift is made by the husband, or by a relation either of the woman or of her husband, it seems to be immaterial whether it is made before marriage, at marriage,

(*t*) *Kātyāyana*, 3 Dig. 563.

(*u*) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 20.

(*x*) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 11, § 30; *V. May.*, iv. 10, § 33.

(*y*) *Judoonath v. Bussunt Coomar*, 11 B. L. R. 286.

(*z*) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 2, § 13—15; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, ix. 3, § 13.

(*a*) *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, ix. 2, § 7.

(*b*) *Vīramitrodaya*, W. & B. 499; *Mādhaviya*, § 50, p. 42; *Varadrājah*, 50; *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 1, § 21.

or after marriage; it is equally her *saudâyika* (c). All savings made by a woman from her *strîdhanum*, and all purchases made with it, of course follow the character of the fund from which they proceeded (d). And her arrears of maintenance have also been held to be her *strîdhanum*, under a text of Devala, which speaks of her subsistence, *i.e.*, what remains of that which is given for her food and raiment—as being her separate property (e). Whether such arrears are also *saudâyika* is a different question. The importance of the distinction arises, when her power of disposition over any particular property, and her independence of marital control, come under consideration.

§ 568. The Mitâksharâ, in treating of woman's property, expressly includes under that term all property lawfully obtained by a woman, in its most general sense, and lays down no rules whatever as to her power of disposal of it (f). No inference of course can be drawn that she has the same power over all the species there enumerated. This is a point which Vijñaneśvara has nowhere discussed. The question is minutely examined in the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, where distinctions are drawn as to a woman's power of alienating different sorts of property. Jîmûta Vâhana, however, follows Kâtyâyana in limiting the term *strîdhanum*, as used by him, to that property “which she has power to give, sell, or use independently of her husband's control” (g). But it is evident that a woman may have absolute power over her property, as regards all other persons but her husband, and yet be fettered in her disposal of it by him. Her property, therefore (taking it in its widest sense), falls under three heads: 1st, Property over which she has absolute control, 2nd, Property as to which her control is

Her power of disposition,

(c) *Gosaien Chund v. Mt. Kishenmunnee*, 6 S. D. 77 (90); *Mt. Doorqa v. Mt. Tejoo*, 5 W. R. Mis., 53; *Gangadaraya v. Parameswaramma*, 5 Mad. H. C. 111; *Jeewun v. Mt. Sona*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 66; *Kashee v. Gour Kishore*, 10 W. R. 139; *Mt. Radha v. Biseshur*, 6 N. W. P. H. C. 279; *Hurymohun v. Shonaton*, 1 Calc. 275; *Ramasawmy v. Virasawmy*, 3 Mad. H. C. 272.

(d) *Luchmun Chunder v. Kalli Churn*, 19 W. R. 292 (P. C.); *Venkata Rama Rau v. V. Suriya*, 1 Mad. L. R. 231. See *Hurst v. Mussoorie Bank*, 1 All. 762.

(e) *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 1, § 15; *Court of Wards v. Mohessur*, 16 W. R. 76.

(f) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 11, § 2, 3.

(g) *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 1, § 18, 19; *D. K. S.* ii. 2, § 24.

limited by her husband, but by him only; 3rd, Property which she can only deal with at all for limited purposes.

over her *saudâ-
yika*.

Property over
which she has
absolute control.

§ 569. FIRST. *Saudâyika* of all sorts, whether movable or immovable, which has been given by relations other than the woman's own husband, and *saudâyika* of a movable character which has been given by him, are absolutely at a woman's own disposal. She may spend, sell or give it away at her own pleasure (*h*). Her husband can neither control her in her dealings with it, nor use it himself. But he may take it in case of extreme distress, as in a famine, or for some indispensable duty, or during illness, or while a creditor keeps him in prison. Even then he would appear to be under at least a moral obligation to restore the value of the property when able to do so. What he has taken without necessity he is bound to repay with interest (*i*). But this right is purely a personal one in the husband. If he does not choose to avail himself of it, his creditors cannot (*k*).

Jagannâtha states that property which a woman has inherited from a woman is also absolutely at her disposal (*l*). As she can only inherit from a relation, this seems to be sound in principle. But I am not aware of the rule being positively so laid down elsewhere. It is decided that where property given by any person to a woman would be her *strîdhanum*, it will equally be such if devised (*m*). There seems no reason why the same rule should not be applied to property inherited.

Property subject
to husband's
control.

§ 570. SECONDLY. Devala mentions a woman's gains as part of the separate property, over which she has exclusive control, and which her husband cannot use except in time of distress. But it is probable that he employs the

(*h*) *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 1, § 21—23; *D. K. S.* ii. 2, § 26, 31, 32; *V. May.*, iv. 10, § 8, 9; *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, ix. 2, § 1—12; *Luchmun Chunder v. Kalli Churn*, 19 W. R. 292; *Kullammal v. Kuppu Pillay*, 1 Mad. H. C. 85; 2 W. MacN. 215; *Wullubhram v. Bijlee*, 2 Bor. 440.

(*i*) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 11, § 31, 32; *Smṛiti Chandrikâ*, ix. 2, § 13—22; *Madhavîya*, § 51; *V. May.*, iv. 10, § 10; *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 1, § 24; *D. K. S.* ii. 2, § 33.

(*k*) *Viramitrodaya*, W. & B. 506, 1 Stra. H. L. 27; 2 Stra. H. L. 23; *Tukaram v. Gunaji*, 8 Bomb. A. C. 129; *Mt. Radha v. Biseshar*, 6 N. W. P., H. C. 279.

(*l*) 3 Dig. 629.

(*m*) *Ramdolal v. Streemutty Joymoney*, 2 M. Dig. 65; *per curiam*, 11 B. L. R. 295.

word in the sense of gifts (*n*). Kātyāyana lays down that "the wealth which is earned by mechanical arts, or which is received through affection from any other (but the kindred), is always subject to the husband's control." And Jīmūta Vâhana adds that he has a right to take it, even though no distress exist (*o*). So the Smṛiti Chandrikâ states that "women possess independent power only over *saudâyika*, and their husband's donation, except immovables, and that their power is not independent over other sorts of property, although they may be *strîdhanum*" (*p*). But her authority over such property is only subject to her husband's control. He may take it, but nobody else can. Therefore, if she dies before her husband, the property remains in his possession, and passes to his heirs. But if he dies before her, she becomes absolute owner of the property, and at her death it passes to her heirs, not to those of her husband (*q*). And of course the rule would be the same, if the acquisitions were made by a widow (*r*). It has been suggested by the Madras High Court, upon the authority of a remark by Mr. Colbrooke, that even as regards landed property not derived from her husband, a married woman would be incapable of making an alienation without her husband's consent (*s*). There is also a text of Kātyāyana, which implies that the husband has a control over his own donations which are not of an immovable character, and that the woman for the first time acquires complete power of disposal after his death (*t*). There can be no doubt that a husband would always be able to exercise a very strong pressure upon his wife, so as to restrain her from giving away her own private property, just as an English husband would do, if his wife proposed to sell her diamonds. But the texts referred to seem not to con-

In other respects absolutely hers.

(*n*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 15. See a different rendering of the same text at 3 Dig. 577, where the word "gains" is translated "wealth received by a woman (from a kinsman)."

(*o*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 19, 20; D. K. S. ii. 2, § 25, 23, 29; V. May., iv. 10, § 7; *Ramdolal v. Streemutty Joymoney*, 2 M. Dig. 65.

(*p*) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ix. 2, § 12.

(*q*) *Per Jagannâtha*, 3 Dig. 628, *Madavaraya v. Tirtha Sami*, 1 Mad. L. R. 307.

(*r*) 2 W. MacN. 239. See case of a grant made by Government to a widow, *Brij Indar v. Janki Koer*, 5 I. A. 1.

(*s*) *Dantaluri v. Mallapudi*, 2 Mad. H. C. 360.

(*t*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 8, 9; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ix. 1, § 14, 15, ix. 2, § 3. 4. See too Nārada, cited Dāya Bhāga, iv. 1, § 23; Viramitrodaya, W. & B. 502.

vey any more than a moral precept, while those already cited, which assert her absolute power, are express and unqualified.

Restricted property.

§ 571. THIRDLY. Immovable property, when given by a husband to his wife, is never at her disposal, even after his death. It is her *strīdhanum* so far that it passes to her heirs, not to his heirs. But as regards her power of alienation, she appears to be under the same restrictions as those which apply to property which she has inherited from a male (*u*). Of course it is different if the gift is coupled with an express power of alienation (*x*).

Succession to maiden's property.

§ 572. The succession to woman's property is a matter of much intricacy, as the lines of succession vary, according as the woman was married or unmarried, according as her marriage was in an approved or an unapproved form, and according to the mode in which the property was obtained. There are also differences between the doctrines of the Benares and the Bengal lawyers on this head. Little is to be found in the Hindu writers in regard to the property of a maiden. So long as she remained in her father's house, the only property she would be likely to possess would be her clothes and her ornaments. If already betrothed, she might also have received gifts in contemplation of marriage from her own family, or from the bridegroom. In some rare cases she might also have inherited property from a female relation. The only text upon the subject is one which is variously ascribed to Baudhâyana and to Nârada, but which cannot be found in the existing works of either writer. "Of an unmarried woman deceased the brothers of the whole blood shall take the inheritance; on failure of them it shall go to the mother, or if she be not living, to the father" (*y*). The Mitâksharâ explains this by saying, "The uterine brothers shall have the ornaments for the head and other gifts which may have been presented to the maiden by her maternal grandfather, or other relations, as well as the pro-

(*u*) See authorities cited *ante*, § 569, note (*h*); Viramitrodaya, W. & B. 502; 2 W. MacN. 35; *Gangadaraiya v. Parameswaramma*, 5 Mad. H. C. 111; *Kotarbasappa v. Chanverova*, 10 Bomb. 403; *Rudr Narain v. Rup Kuar*, 1 All. 734.

(*x*) *Jeewun v. Mt. Sona*, 1 N. W. P. H. C. 66.

(*y*) *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 3, § 7; D. K. S. ii. 1, § 1.

perty which may have been regularly inherited by her" (z). The latter remark clearly applies to property not inherited from a male, as her father is spoken of as still alive. The result, of course, is that her property is kept in her own family. In default of parents the property goes to their nearest relations (a). All presents which may have been received from the bridegroom are to be returned to him, after deducting the expenses already incurred on both sides (b).

§ 573. Property possessed by a married woman would go in different lines of succession according to its nature and origin. Her bridal gifts, being articles of specially feminine ornament or use, would naturally pass to her own daughters. And as any of her daughters who had married would probably have received a suitable provision when they left their father's home, where there were daughters both married and unmarried, the latter would be the preferable heirs. So among the married, those who were most in need would have the preference (c). Her dowry (*Çulka*) had in early times belonged to her parents, and not to herself. It would return to her father's family, instead of passing into the family of her husband (§ 77). When that separation of interest between herself and her husband arose, which admitted of her acquiring independent property after her marriage, the property so acquired might be of a more general and important character than that obtained at her bridal. No reason would exist for making it pass exclusively to daughters, and sons would be allowed to share as well as daughters (d). Hence a separate line of succession would arise for what are called "gifts subsequent," and the husband's donation.

Property of a married woman.

§ 574. FIRST. The earliest rule as to the devolution of the *Çulka* is to be found in a text of Gautama, which has been variously translated. Messrs. West and Bühler render it, "The sister's fee belongs to her uterine brothers, if her

Devolution of *Çulka*.

(z) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 11, § 30; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, ix. 3, § 35; *Mādhaviya*, § 50; *V. May.*, iv. 10, § 34.

(a) *Vīramitrodaya*, W. & B. 523.

(b) *Yājñavalkya*, ii. § 146; *Mitāksharā*, ii. 11, § 29, 30; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, ix. 3, § 34; *V. May.*, iv. 10, § 33; *D. K. S.* ii. 1, § 2; *Mayr*, 178.

(c) *Mayr*, 173.

(d) *Mayr*, 174.

Devolution of
Çulka.

mother be dead. Some say (that it belongs to them even) whilst the mother lives" (e). This text in the *Dāya Bhāga* is translated, "The sister's fee belongs to the uterine brothers; after them it goes to the mother, and next to the father. Some say before her." This *Jīmūta Vāhana* explains by saying that according to some the father takes before the mother, and both after the uterine brothers (f). The explanation of *Balambhaṭṭa*, which Dr. Mayr prefers, is, that the word mother in this verse refers to the same person who is spoken of in the preceding verse of *Gautama*, where her other property is said to go to her daughters; that is to say, that it refers to the woman who has received the *Çulka*, not to the mother of that woman. Accordingly Dr. Mayr translates it, "After the death of the mother, her fee passes to her uterine brothers; some think that the sisters' fee belongs to them even during her life." If this translation is correct, it would mark two stages of law in regard to the *Çulka*. First, when it was considered to be the property of the bride's father, as the price paid to him for her, and accordingly passed to his sons, even during her life. Secondly, when it became the property of the girl at once, as her dowry, but on her death passed in the same manner as it had formerly done to her father's heirs (g). However this may have been in early times, it is quite clear that the writers of the Benares school treat the *Çulka* as an exception to the rule that a woman's property goes to her daughters, and make it pass at once to the brothers, and in default of them to the mother (h). *Yājñavalkya*, however, classes the *Çulka* with gifts from her kindred, and gifts subsequent, which only go to the brothers if the sister has died without issue. Accordingly the Bengal authorities treat the text of *Gautama*, not as an exception to the general rule, but only as explaining how this species of property devolves in the absence of nearer heirs (i). Its

Benares.

Bengal.

(e) *Gautama*, xxviii. § 22, 23.

(f) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 27, 28.

(g) Mayr, 170.

(h) *Mitāksharā*, ii. 11, § 14; *Smṛiti Chandrikā*, ix. 3, § 33; *Vīramitrodaya*, W. & B., 525; *Vivāda Chintāmaṇi*, 270; V. Mayr., iv. 10, § 32; *Mādhaviya*, § 50, p. 45; *Varadrājah*, 48.

(i) *Yājñavalkya*, ii. § 145; *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 10—30; D. K. S., ii. 3, § 15—18; *Judoonath v. Bussunt*, 11 B. L. R., 286, 297.

succession, as understood by them, will be treated under the third head (§ 579).

§ 575. SECONDLY. *Yautaka*, or property given at the nuptials, always passes first to the woman's daughters or other issue, if she has any. Little is to be found on the subject in the early writers. Baudhâyana says, "The daughters shall inherit (of) the mother's ornaments as many as (are worn) according to the custom of the caste" (*k*). Vâsishta says, "Let the daughters share the nuptial gifts of their mother" (*l*). The word here used for nuptial gifts, '*pârîṇ-âyyam*,' is the same which is used by Manu (ix. § 11), where he says that a wife should be engaged in the superintendence of household utensils (*m*). It apparently refers to articles of domestic use given to a girl on her marriage, like the clocks, teapots, and table ornaments which an English bride receives to adorn her new home. So, among the Kandhs, the personal ornaments and household furniture go to the daughters and not to the sons (*n*). Gautama adds a further distinction, "A woman's separate property (*strî-dhanum*) belongs (in the first instance) to her unmarried daughters (and on failure of them) to those daughters who are poor" (*o*). None of these authors suggest different lines of descent for the property referred to. This, for the first time, appears in Manu. He says, "Property given to the mother on her marriage (*yautaka*) is inherited by her (unmarried) daughter" (*p*). In a later passage he says generally, "On the death of the mother let all the uterine brothers and the uterine sisters (if unmarried) equally divide the maternal estate." This necessarily refers to property different from the *yautaka* which had been stated to go exclusively to the daughters. Then, after describing the sixfold property of a woman (§ 565), he goes on, "What she received after marriage (*anvâdheyam*) from the family of her husband, and what her affectionate lord may have given

Devolution of
Yautaka.

Yautaka.

(*k*) Baudhâyana, ii. 2, § 27.

(*l*) Vâsishta, xvii. § 24.

(*m*) Mayr, 166; Vivâda Chintâmanî, 268.

(*n*) 2 Hunter's Orissa, 79.

(*o*) Gautama, xxviii. § 21.

(*p*) Manu, ix. § 131; Dâya Bhâga, iv. 2, § 13.

her, shall be inherited, even if she die in his lifetime, by her children" (q). This seems to be the origin of the different lines of succession, which are here treated of under the second and third heads.

Rule of descent.

§ 576. The authors of the Smṛiti Chandrikā and the Vīramitrodaya appear to take the first text of Manu literally, as allowing none of a woman's issue except her unmarried daughters to take her *yautaka*. In default of such daughters, they make it pass at once to the husband, or to the parents, according as the marriage was of an approved or an unapproved form (r). But this narrow interpretation is not followed by either the Benares or the Bengal school. The rule of descent laid down by Yājñavalkya is as follows: "The *strīdhanum* of a wife dying without issue, who has been married in one of the four forms of marriage designated *Brāhma*, &c. (§ 75), belongs to the husband; if she have issue, then the *strīdhanum* goes to her daughters; should she have been married in another form, then her *strīdhanum* goes to her parents" (s). This rather vague rule is expanded by the Mitāksharā. "Hence, if the mother be dead, daughters take her property in the first instance; and here, in the case of competition between married and maiden daughters, the unmarried take the succession; but on failure of them, the married daughters; and here again, in the case of competition between such as are provided and those who are unendowed, the unendowed take the succession first; but, on failure of them, those who are endowed" (t). Next to daughters come granddaughters, and then sons of daughters, sons, and grandsons, those in the second generation always taking *per stirpes* (u). Stepchildren are not recognized by the Mitāksharā as entitled, except in the single case, which has now become impossible, where the woman who has left the property was a wife of an inferior class, while the children who claim it are by a wife of a

Descent of
Yautaka by
Benares law.

(q) Manu, ix. § 192, 195; Mayr, 174.

(r) Smṛiti Chandrikā, ix. 3, § 12, 15; Vīramitrodaya, W. & B. 516.

(s) Yājñavalkya, ii. § 145.

(t) Mitāksharā, ii. 11, § 13; V. May., iv. 10, § 17, 18.

(u) Mitāksharā, ii. 11, § 9, 12, 15—19, 24; V. May., iv. 10, § 20—23. Sons wholly exclude grandsons whose father is dead. *Raghunundana v. Gopeenath*, 2 W. MacN. 121; *post*, § 581.

higher class (x). The Smṛiti Chandrikâ, however, allows the stepchildren to come in if there are no other heirs, such as progeny, husband or the like (y). In default of all these, if the marriage was in an approved form, the property passes to the husband, and after him, according to Vijñaneśvara, to his nearest sapinḍas. According to the Mayûkha, to those relations who are nearest to him through her in his own family. If the marriage was in an unapproved form it passes to her parents, the mother taking before the father (z). Vijñaneśvara traces the line of descent no further. But other writers of the same school cite a text of Vṛihaspati, in accordance with which the succession next passes to the son of the mother's sister, of the maternal and paternal uncle's wife, of the father's sister, of the mother-in-law, and of an elder brother's wife, each in their order (a).

Precisely the above order is laid down by the Smṛiti Chandrikâ and the Vîramitrodaya in respect of all the mother's property, which is not *yautaka*, or received after marriage or from the husband; that is, which does not come under the two texts of Manu already cited (b).

Extended to
other cases.

§ 577. The order of succession to *Yautaka*, according to the Bengal authorities, is similar, but not exactly the same. "It goes first to the unaffianced daughters; if there be none such, it devolves on those who are betrothed. In their default it passes to the married daughters" (c). Jîmûta Vâhana does not notice barren or widowed daughters, but the Dâya-krahma-sangraha states that they succeed in default of married daughters who have, or who are likely to have, male issue. Çri Kṛishṇa also says that these daughters take one after the other, as distinct classes, and not merely in default of each other. For instance, that on the death of a

Bengal law.

(x) Mitâksharâ, ii. 11, § 22; V. May., iv. 10, § 19. The text of Manu, on which this rule is based, is explained differently in Bengal. *Post*, § 580.

(y) Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ix. 3, § 38.

(z) Mitâksharâ, ii. 11, § 11; V. May., iv. § 23. According to the Smṛiti Chandrikâ, property given to a woman at the time of a disapproved marriage reverts to the donors; ix. 3, § 31, 32.

(a) V. May., iv. 10, § 30; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ix. 3, § 36, 37; Viramitrodaya, W. & B. 526. In Mithilâ, but not elsewhere, the son of a woman's half sister is her heir. *Sreenarain v. Bhya Jha*, 2 S. D., 23 (29, 35).

(b) Manu, ix. § 131, 195; Smṛiti Chandrikâ, ix. 3, § 16—30, 36—41; Viramitrodaya, W. & B., 511, *et seq.*

(c) Dâya Bhâga, iv. 2, § 13, 22, 23, 26.

Bengal law as to
Yautaka.

daughter who had taken as affianced or married, but who has died without a son, the estate will pass to the next daughter who is capable of taking, and not to the husband of the one who had already succeeded. "For the right of the husband is relative to the 'woman's separate property,' and wealth which has in this way passed from one to another can no longer be considered as the 'woman's separate property' (*d*)."

The Bengal writers also differ from those of the Benares school in excluding granddaughters altogether, and bringing in the son before the daughter's son, and the grandson and great-grandson in the male line next after the daughter's son (*e*). They also differ in introducing stepsons, as far as the great-grandchildren, next after the great-grandsons of the woman herself. This appears to be upon the authority of a text of Manu, which declares that if one of several wives of a man brings forth a male child, they are all by means of that son mothers of male issue (*f*). In default of all these the husband or the parents succeed, according to the form of marriage. But the husband's sapin̄ḍas do not appear to take as in the Mitāksharâ. In default of him, the succession passes at once to the brother, mother, or father of the deceased woman (*g*). On the other hand, where the marriage is of a disapproved form, the inheritance passes to the mother, father, and brother, each in default of the other, and if none of them exist, then to the husband (*h*). Last of all come in the ulterior heirs under the text of Vrihaspati. But they do not take in the order there stated. They are arranged upon the Bengal principle of religious benefits, as follows: husband's younger brother, husband's brother's son, sister's son, son of husband's sister, brother's son, daughter's husband, father-in-law, and husband's elder brother. In default of all these, sakulyas, learned Brâhmans, and the King (*i*).

(*d*) D. K. S. ii. 3, § 5, 6. See *post*, § 581.

(*e*) *Dāya Bhāga* iv. 2, § 17—21; D. K. S. ii. 3, § 8—10. The son of the daughter's son never succeeds. *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 34; D. K. S., ii. 6, § 2.

(*f*) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 32; D. K. S., ii. 3, § 11—13.

(*g*) D. K. S., ii. 3, § 14—17; *Bistoo Pershad v. Radha Soonder*, 16 W. R., 115.

(*h*) D. K. S. ii. 3, § 19—21.

(*i*) *Dāya Bhāga*, iv. 3, § 31, 35—37; D. K. S. ii. 6. It is impossible to see upon what principle the husband's father and elder brother come in last.

§ 578. THIRDLY. The succession to that property belonging to a married woman which is neither her *Çulka* nor her *Yautaka* is a matter upon which there is much variance. The texts of Manu, which state that her property shall be shared equally by her sons and daughters, and that gifts received by her after marriage from her husband and his family shall go to her children generally, have been already cited (§ 575). Other writers say with equal distinctness, that her property shall be shared equally by sons and unmarried daughters (*k*). Vijñāneśvara only recognizes one line of descent for the whole of a married woman's property, except her *Çulka*, viz., that already given for her *Yautaka* (§ 576). He explains the text of Manu, not as meaning that brothers and sisters take together, but that the sisters take first and the brothers afterwards, each class sharing equally *inter se*; that is, he brings it in as an illustration of the rule previously stated as to the succession of daughters before sons, and not as an exception to it. And the same view is apparently taken by the Mādhavīya (*l*). But the Smṛiti Chandrikā, Viramitrodaya, Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, Mayūkha, and Varadrājah all take these texts literally, as prescribing a different course of descent for the two sorts of *strīdhanum* there specified, viz., gifts subsequent to marriage, received either from the woman's own family or the family of her husband, and gifts received from her husband. These are shared simultaneously and equally by the woman's sons and daughters being unmarried. Those who are married, and granddaughters, only receive a trifle as a mark of respect, and widows are wholly excluded. But if there are no unmarried daughters, married daughters, whose husbands are living, are also allowed by Kātyāyana to share with their own brothers (*m*). The writers of the Benares school do not trace the line of descent any further, nor suggest how the property is to go in default of the heirs above named.

Devolution of
Ayautaka.

Mitāksharā.

Benares law.

(*k*) Devala, Dāya Bhāga, iv. 2, § 6; Sancha and Lichita, 3 D. Dig. 588; Vṛihaspati, ib.

(*l*) Mitāksharā, ii. 11, § 19—21. See Viramitrodaya, W. & B., 512—514; Mādhavīya, § 50, p. 43.

(*m*) Smṛiti Chandrikā, ix. 3, § 1—11; Viramitrodaya, W. & B. 507—508; V. May., iv. 10, § 15, 16; Varadrājah, 47; Vivāda Chintāmaṇi, 266.

Bengal law.

§ 579. The Bengal writers also interpret the above texts literally, and take them as applying to all property except the *Yautaka*, and that given by the father of the woman (*n*). The order of succession as laid down by them is as follows: first, son and maiden daughter take together (*o*), and in default of either the other takes the whole; on failure of both, the estate passes to the married daughter who has, or who may have male issue, then to the son's son, the daughter's son, and the son's grandson successively; and in default of all of these, to the male issue of the rival wife, and lastly to barren and widowed daughters (*p*). The further descent depends on the source from which the property was derived. If it comes within the text of Yājñavalkya—"that which has been given to her by her kindred, as well as her fee or gratuity, and anything bestowed after marriage, her kinsmen take if she die without issue,"—then the order of succession is first to the whole brothers; if there be none, to the mother; if she be dead, to the father; and on failure of all these to the husband, and the ulterior heirs as already described (*q*). But in this text the words, "given to her by her kindred," signify that which was given to her by her parents in her maiden state, and the word "fee," does not include "a gratuity presented to damsels at marriages, called *Āsura*, and the rest (*r*)."¹ If, on the other hand, the property being *Ayautaka* does not come within the terms of the above text, then it devolves in exactly the same manner as the *Yautaka* of a married woman who has left no issue (*s*).

Devolution of
Ayautaka.

Property given
by the father.

§ 580. The text of Manu (ix. § 198), "The wealth of a woman, which has been in any manner given to her by her father, let the Brāhmaṇî damsel take; or let it belong to her offspring," is explained by the Mitāksharâ as authorising stepchildren of a wife of superior class to inherit (*t*).

(*n*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 2, § 1—9.

(*o*) The word maiden means unbetrothed. *Srinath Gangopadhya v. Sarba mangala*, 2 B. L. R., A. C. 144.

(*p*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 2, § 9—12; D. K. S. ii. 4, § 1—10.

(*q*) Dāya Bhāga, ii. 3, § 10, 29—31; ante, § 577; *Judoonath v. Bussunt Coommar*, 11 B. L. R. 286; *Hurymohun v. Sonatun*, 1 Calc. 275.

(*r*) Dāya Bhāga, iv. 3, § 15, 23.

(*s*) D. K. S. ii. 4, § 11; ante, § 577.

(*t*) Mitāksharâ, ii. 11, § 22.

The Bengal writers treat the word Brâhmaṇî as merely illustrative, and explain the text as establishing an exception to the rule laid down in the last paragraph. According to them, property given by a father to his daughter at any time is never shared by her sons, but goes to her daughters exclusively; the maiden taking first, then the married daughter who has, or is likely to have male issue, and lastly the barren or widowed daughters. After all these come their sons (u). The succession then proceeds, as in the case of *Yautaka*, down to the great-grandson of the co-wife, after which it goes to the brother, mother, father, and husband, under the text of Yājñavalkya already cited (x).

§ 581. The order of succession in the case of property inherited by a female from a female, has never, as far as I know, received any discussion. It has been decided, that even if such property was *strîdhanum* in the hands of the last holder, it would not be *strîdhanum* for the purpose of descent in the hands of the next heir (§ 528). None of the rules, therefore, which are given for the descent of a woman's separate property by those who use the term in a technical sense, would appear to have any application. Vijñaneśvara uses the term in its general sense, and declares that all the property included in that term (except *Ḣulka*) goes in the line of female heirs. As regards a maiden's property, he expressly says that the line marked out by him applies to property which she has inherited (y). I have already offered reasons for supposing that he was not referring to property which she had inherited from males (§ 524), but there is no reason why he should not have included property inherited by her from a female. The only other reference to the point by a native writer is in the *Dâya-krahma-sangraha*. The author points out that if property has fallen to a maiden daughter with married sisters, and she dies after marriage, but without sons, the property will not pass to her husband, who would be heir to her separate property, but to the married sisters. This assumes that on her death succession would be traced back

Property inherited from a female.

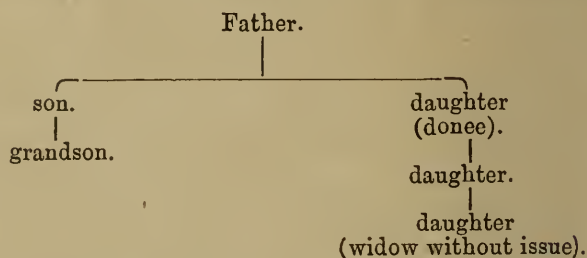
(u) *Dâya Bhâga*, iv. 2, § 16; D. K. S. ii. 5.

(x) *Judoonath v. Bussunt Coomar*, 11 B. L. R. 286, 300.

(y) *Mitâksharâ*, ii. 11, § 8, 30.

Its devolution.

again to the last holder. The sister would not be her heir, but would be the heir of the mother from whom she derived the property (z). The same principle seems to have been followed in a Bengal case. There a father gave a taluq to his daughter : she died, upon which the property passed to



her daughter ; she also died, leaving a widowed and issueless daughter. It was held, upon the opinion of the pandits, that the taluq had been the *strīdhanum* of the daughter who took by gift, but not of the daughter who took by inheritance. Consequently, that at her death it did not pass to her daughter, but to her mother's brother ; if he was not living, to the brother's son (a). Now the brother was the heir of the original donee, but he was certainly not the heir of his niece, who took after the donee. The Mayūkha says, " It is clear that although there be daughters, the sons or other heirs still succeed to the mother's estate, as far as it is distinct from the part already described (as subject to the peculiar devolution under texts applicable to particular species of *strīdhanum*.)" This Mr. Justice West explains as meaning that, where a woman holds property which is not strictly *strīdhanum* as described by the early writers, descent is traced from her as if she were a male. I have already suggested that this passage may be explained differently, as meaning that the property would go to such heirs as would have taken it if it had never fallen into the hands of the female ; that is, that it would go to the heirs of the last holder (b). This accords with the view taken in the case last cited. But a case reported by Mr. W. MacNaghten seems rather to accord with the theory suggested by

Doctrine of the
Mayūkha.

(z) D. K. S. ii. 3, § 6.

(a) *Prankishen v. Mt. Bhagwuttee*, 1 S. D. 3 (4) ; *Sengemalathammal v. Velayuda Moodelly*, 3 Mad. H. C. 312.

(b) See ante, § 529, 530.

Mr. Justice West. A woman purchased landed property with her own funds, and died, leaving sons, and a grandson whose father had also died. The pandits stated that the sons of the deceased woman were entitled to the whole property, to the exclusion of the grandson. Should there be any maiden daughter, a small portion must be given to her to defray her nuptial expenses (c). Mr. MacNaghten approves of this opinion, on the ground that the property, though acquired by the woman, was not *strīdhanum* properly so called, and that its descent was consequently not governed by the rules applicable to that species of property. Had it been *strīdhanum*, the daughter would, he says, have been co-heir with the sons. If, however, the property had been held by a male, the grandson would not have been excluded (§ 460), so that it is not clear on what principle the case was decided. Nor was the property inherited, so that it does not help much in settling the present question.

Chastity has been held not to be an essential, where a female claims as heir to the property of a woman (d). I know of no native authority on the point.

Want of chastity

(c) *Raghunundana v. Gopeenath*, 2 W. MacN. 121.

(d) *Mt. Ganga v. Ghasita*, 1 All. 46.

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